

The  
HISTORY OF  
WATERFORD  
NEW YORK

SYDNEY ERNEST HAMMERSLEY



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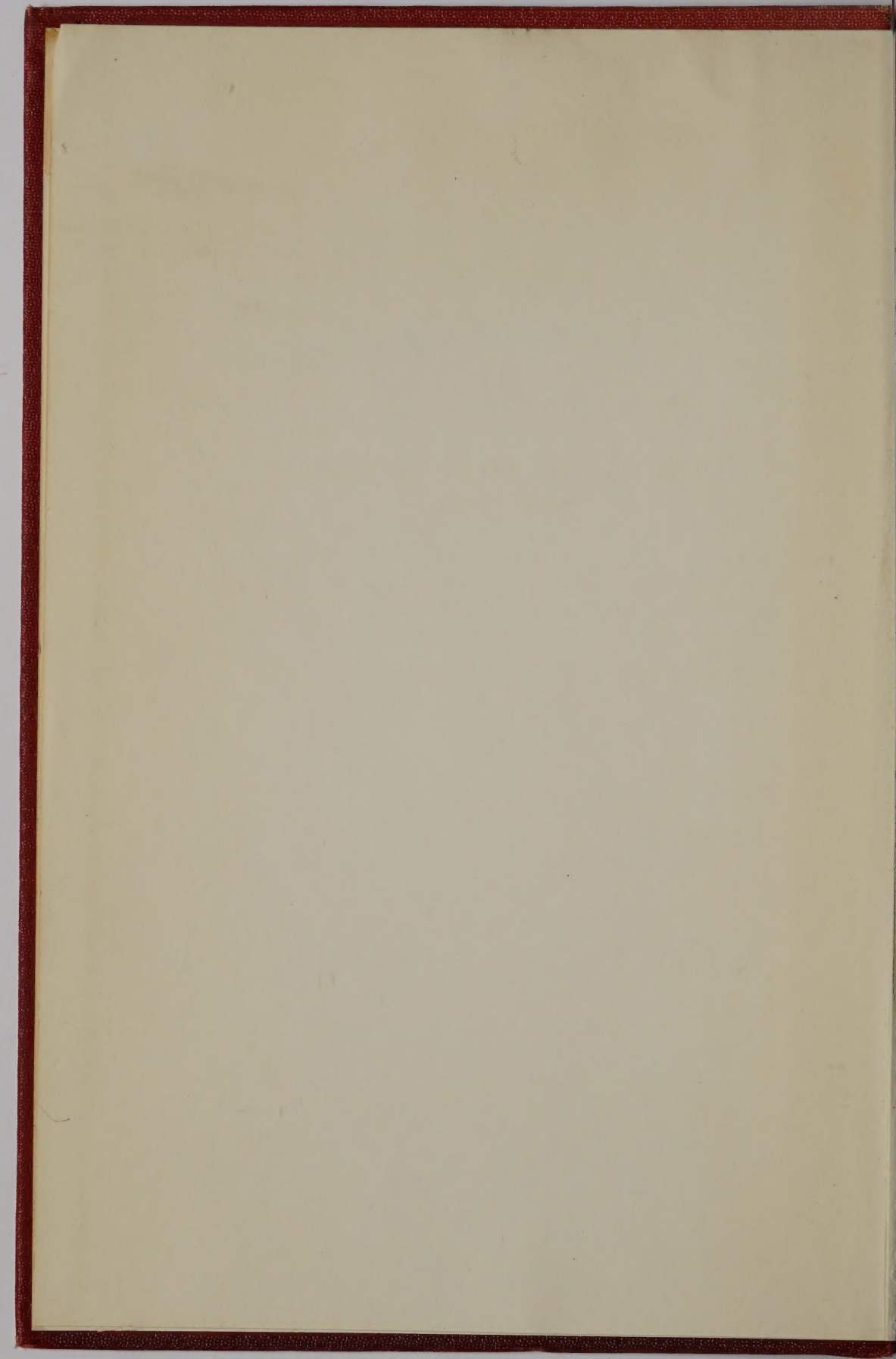
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**THE HISTORY OF WATERFORD  
NEW YORK**

**BY SYDNEY SENNET BAMBERG**

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by  
SYDNEY ERNEST HAMMERSLEY

*Published privately by*  
COL. SYDNEY E. HAMMERSLEY (Ord. Ret.)  
Waterford, New York  
1957

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FLORENCE, FRANCES, and DORIS

## THE HISTORIAN

He writes about the world at large . . . Some kingdom and its map, or just . . . The story of his town . . . He gathers facts and rumors and . . . He sifts them one by one . . . And talks to people everywhere . . . To get his writing done . . . A document, a corner stone . . . The marker on a grave . . . The Bible or some newsprint old . . . That someone thought to save . . . His words may not be perfect . . . But he preserves the memories . . . Of years and years gone by . . . And as his pages take their place . . . The past will never die.

By JAMES J. METCALFE

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## P R E F A C E

WATERFORD, New York, once Halfmoon, with over three hundred years behind it, deserves a written account of its history. Passing through it to the northern fields of battle went most of our country's colonial and continental armies, together with the troops of the war of 1812. Their passage through our place even with the aid of this book remains largely unrecorded.

Through Waterford too, went Daniel Morgan's famous riflemen to do their sharpshooting at Saratoga and southward bound, a part contribution to their effort, came the captive "Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne."

Waterford also had its early patriots and pioneers, the commonwealth builders, whose effort and toil can still be traced as we study its historical sites.

Nothing of Waterford's illustrious history has heretofore been written except news articles and "Waterford, 1794-1912" a laudable task of the Waterford Study Club.

The basic research for Waterford's past was found to be a slow and difficult task. The great fire of 1841 entirely destroyed the village's ancient records and the Town Hall fire of 1914 burned all that had accumulated since that first devastation.

As a result not a single line of history was available in the new Town Hall. What is now recorded comes from Waterford diaries, original village and Van Schaick Patent maps, old newsprint and from old books. The last are ironically the kind which are customarily tossed from most libraries because of their age. In the writing of this book we have been guided by one basic motto "Get the Truth." Only substance that can be proven has been used and all hearsay data has been excluded, unless it had printed support.

The determination to print the book came largely from the writings or recommendations of the Historical Section of New York State's Department of Education. The decision to write the book

was stimulated by the needs of the pupils of the Waterford Public Schools. Some of these scholars had in the past paid me annual visits to obtain details of local history. Some chapters are printed entirely as a result of the vote of a Waterford Public School council session for such material.

Maps were found to be a most valuable aid in our task. For the loan of this ancient map material we are exceedingly indebted to Waterford's Mrs. Charles J. (Ethel) Weaver, who also loaned copies of 1886 newspapers which went back to Waterford's first recorded days. These old newswritings were edited by an anonymous and modest old resident. Some of the historical sites mentioned in his writings and those shown upon the maps are nearly two centuries old. Before being used they were checked for distance and location and most were found to be amazingly correct.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cramer Ormsby Jr. loaned valuable excerpts from the Diary of Laura Cramer Ormsby, an ancestor, and Mrs. Irving Wright's newspaper scrap book gave at least one "scoop."

Mrs. Wallace J. (Doris Hammersley) Haley, Dannemora Town Librarian, always patient and helpful, provided numerous reference books while the humorous staff writer of the *Troy Record* Newspapers, Mrs. Hilda Goodwin, proved to be a good friend in regard to a heavy assignment of checking and punctuation.

Mrs. Edna Lavender of Waterford helped greatly with typing tasks, while two Arsenal men of a long standing friendship, namely the late Frank R. Rancourt of Watervliet and Kenneth Rathbun of historic Stillwater, New York, have put me under obligations that I cannot repay.

Friends in this manner are proven to be an actual necessity in any task having a public value.

S.E.H.



## FOREWORD

THE PUBLICATION of the history of any community is an important event. It excites the interest, not to say the curiosity, of numbers of people. It becomes a reference work for all who are interested in places, events and people in the area which is described. It often becomes the subject of debate and even dispute among those who find what they regard as errors of fact and interpretation. This adds spice to the study and discussion of local history. Sometimes it results in rectifying unsubstantiated lore and bringing to light important new information.

Colonel Hammersley has written a very useful book which is likely to provoke interest, criticism and praise. No one who reads it can fail to become interested in the many facets of life in Waterford brought together here in one place for the first time. There will be critics who will wonder why the book is not organized in a different way or who will disagree with certain statements. Many will acclaim the author for having done a prodigious amount of work and for having published so much information about a community within the covers of a single book.

One of the unusual features of this book is its emphasis upon the place of local history in the schools. It begins appropriately with a rather full chronology of events which forms the framework of the history of Waterford. I can imagine that many a teacher will silently thank Colonel Hammersley many times over as he or she goes about selecting information to present to a seventh grade class. Whether one is old or young is immaterial. He will find this a useful compendium of knowledge about Waterford.

DR. ALBERT B. COREY, *New York State Historian*  
*Division of Archives and History,*  
*University of the State of New York,*  
*State Department of Education.*

June 8, 1956





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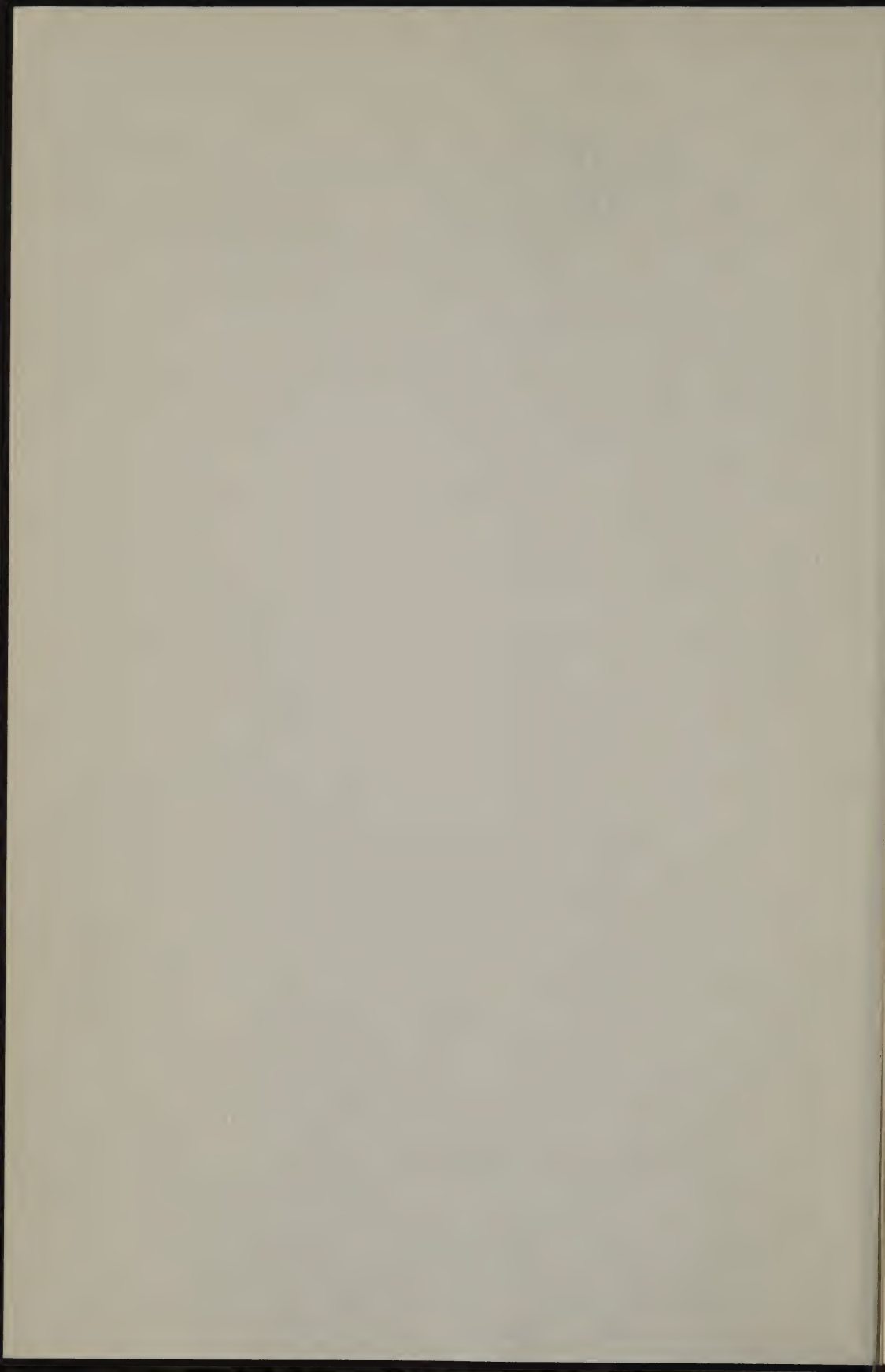
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NEW YORK**





## CHAPTER ONE

### WATERFORD'S NATIVITY, POPULATION AND CHARACTERISTICS, 1720-1950

TO ASCERTAIN the nativity of Waterford's present population together with its changes since early days, caused extended research.

The question posed by the student council of Waterford School No. 1 namely, "Is the first nationality still in the majority? if not, what group is it?", took a full ten months to find the answer.

One might ask "Why not try Washington?" While the required data should easily have been obtained there, it was not.

Our fruitless Washington experience reminded us of the man who dropped his watch in the sea; he knew where it was, but could not get it. Continuing our search we tried the libraries of Troy and Albany, getting some helpful assistance from Albany's Department of Audit and Control.<sup>1</sup>

The principal item we sought (latest nativity) was unwittingly provided by a War II Veteran's Honor Roll which had been erected by the Waterford Lions Club. The study of this roll furnished what the author regards as a satisfactory index to the nativity of the 1945 population which is shown under the title "Waterford's 1945 Racial Union."

To get a substitute nativity answer for this book by any other method would have been almost impossible. We admit that our formula does not decipher or include the results of racial inter-marriages.

The first Halfmoon-Waterford nationality was definitely Dutch in 1655 to 1720. In 1720 the Precinct of Halfmoon consisted of eighty people of whom eight were "Slaves." Judging from the names of the fourteen 1720 "Freeholders" whose names are recorded in Albany, there can be no doubt as to their Dutch lineage.

Of the other 66 unnamed people of the 1720's we are justified

---

1 Municipal Research Associate Dorothy Daniels.

in assuming that they were also Dutch. This almost pure Dutch stock was diluted in the next seventy years to about twenty per cent, by newcomers from New England. In our first United States Census of 1790 the Halfmoon population had increased to 602.

By 1850 and actually long before, Waterford had with other places begun to earn the title "The Melting Pot of the World." Our census of 1850 showed that the village had 2683 people of whom 468 were Irish, with 76 from England, together with 30 Scots and 21 from Canada.

In the year 1870 the village numbered 3071<sup>2</sup> of whom 737 were foreign born. The Civil War also brought us 54 Negroes.

A study of the 1950 United States Census shows that Waterford's former heavy Irish immigrant population, once numbering 17 per cent, had dropped to less than one per cent. Looming ahead of the Irish were the Italian immigrants numbering four per cent.

People who are happy and well fed do not migrate in large numbers. Wars too, with the distress and unhappiness which follows, are also causes of immigration.

Waterford's Irish people, great lovers of their homeland, began to leave the land of their birth in the first quarter of 1800. Great increases in Ireland's population pressed hard against the resources of Irish soil. A food crisis followed which almost reached a condition of famine in the years 1831 to 1842.

This was due to six seasons of dearth caused by successive failures of their potato crop. Two things may have caused our Irish people to select Waterford U. S. A. for their new home. One may have been sentimental for they had a Waterford in Ireland too. The other, far more compelling, was that the first Champlain canal was being dug about 1820 and this meant that work was available here.

Further study of the 1950<sup>3</sup> Federal Census shows that the Village of Waterford then had 2986 people. Of these 255 were foreign born. Italy sent us 121, 41 came from France or Canada, 34 from the British Isles, 23 from Eire, 9 from Poland and a scattering from other countries.

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<sup>2</sup> United States Department of Commerce Letter, Jan. 31, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> New York's 1950 Population, 1950 U. S. Census, General Characteristics P-B 32/. Pp. 32-125.

Women exceed the males by eight per cent. We have 620 children up to fourteen years of age. Two hundred and fifty-eight persons are either widowed or divorced. Of the village's population of 2968, some 1424 are employed. Of these 58 per cent are male and 37 per cent female.

Twenty per cent of the population have incomes of less than \$2000.00 while the median income is \$3574.00.<sup>4</sup>

Eleven per cent are 65 years old, or older. The population has increased two and one-quarter per cent since 1940. However we disregard this so-called increase in the village because of its habitual heavy fluctuations.

#### TOWN OF WATERFORD, NATIVITY, POPULATION AND ETC.

The population of the Town which also includes the Village and Northside was 6,052 in 1950.<sup>5</sup> This was an increase of six per cent since the 1940 census was taken.

The War II Veteran's Honor Roll upon which we based our study of Waterford's nativity, contained 750 names. This gives a  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent sampling of the town's population. These names are almost entirely of male servicemen. These names we believe provide the key to the veteran's first homeland or that of his father's before him. Each of the veteran's names were individually checked against volumes of genealogy<sup>6</sup> together with other school information to discover the land of the veteran's origin. We think the results of this study are correct. War II drafts included about every family and the drafting was administered fairly.

This "improvisator" formula provided the answer that we had suspected. This was the idea that Waterford's 1945 population was composed (by a narrow margin) of a people who had descended from the Anglo-Saxons. There were followed in number by the Irish, the French and the Italians. Our only surprise was that the

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4 Taken from a 20 per cent sampling, pp. 32-54. From 1950 United States Pop. Census Report, P-B 32. Reprint of Vol. II, Part 32, Chapter B, U. S. Printing Office, 1952.

5 *New York Legislative Manual*, 1954, p. 1148.

6 *Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical Memoirs*, Vols. 1-4, Cuyler Reynolds, 1911.



French group was larger than the Italians. This French (or Canadian) influence centers in the Northside.

A short review covering all the people of our area shows that even while the Mayflower group was settling in New England, the Dutch were similarly starting on the Hudson. The Dutch colony here did not grow rapidly, even when the English took over.

Finally the spreading New England group began to invade the Hudson valley and diluted the Dutch stock. In 1788 sixty-one per cent of the inhabitants in our Halfmoon colony were Dutch, 18 per cent English, 13 per cent Irish, and 8 per cent Scots.

We have already told of the near Irish famines in 1831-1842 which built up our Irish population.

The French Canadians coming to the Northside perhaps in the 1840's founded the French settlement. Settling beside the vigorous Mohawk, they were reminded of the St. Lawrence that they had forsaken.

The Waterford Italians began to arrive in numbers in the early 1900's. They under the "padrone's" guidance helped build the Barge canal. They became both merchants and home owners reflecting a love of the soil. Almost every Italian home was once noted for its neat and well kept garden.

As our population began to increase of late, the nearby farming land was absorbed by modern housing developments. The farms now smaller were pushed farther into the interior. They are now largely occupied by the Polish, Italian, Czech, Russian and Lithuanian segment of our population.

Our once basic Dutch stock it will be noted, has now dropped to two and a half per cent of the total.

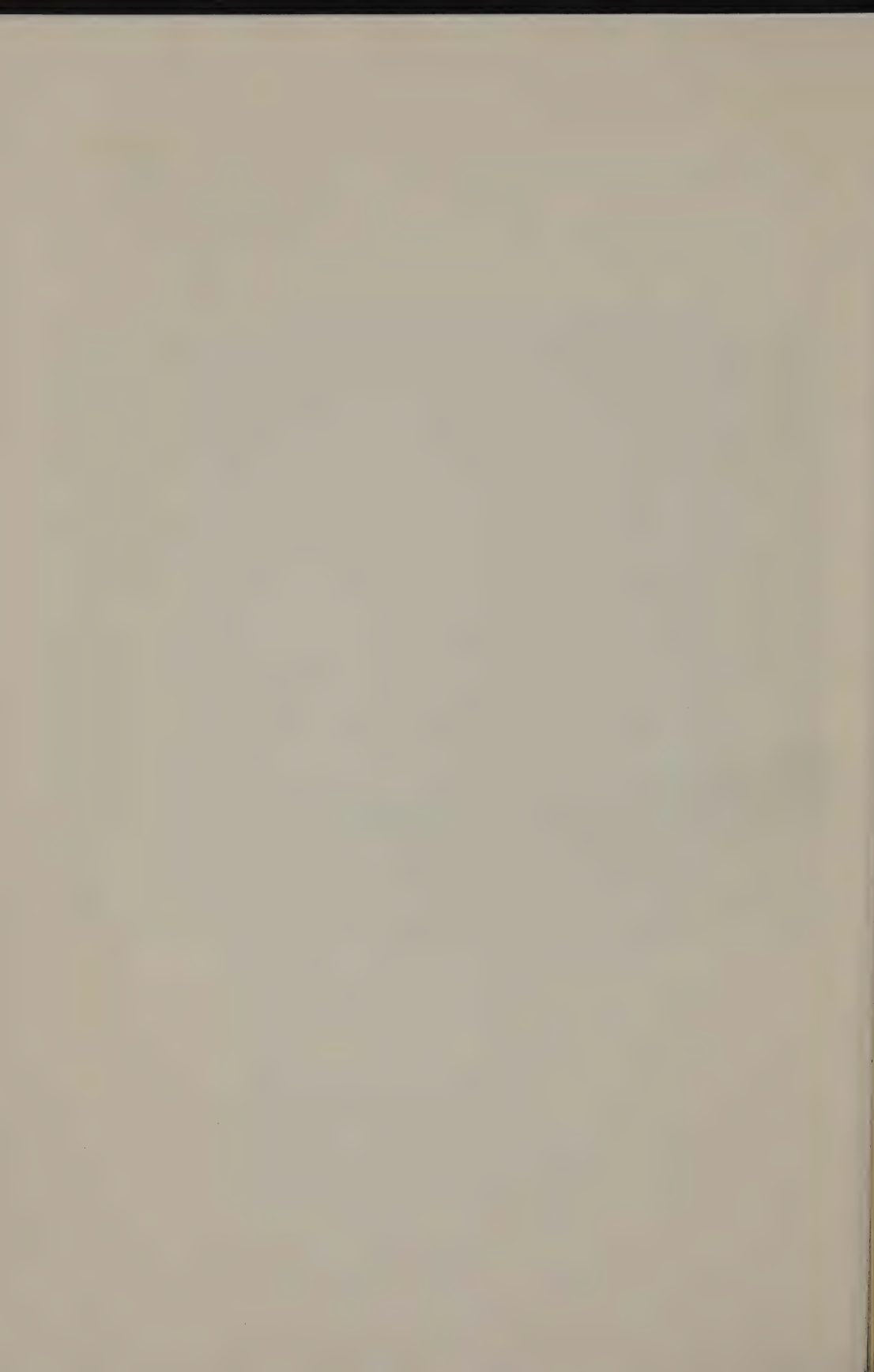
#### WATERFORD'S 1945 RACIAL UNION (Percentages)

English, Welsh and North of Ireland .....	26.00
Irish .....	19.30
French .....	18.80
Italian .....	14.80
Polish, Czechs, Russian, Lithuanians .....	6.00
German and Austrian .....	3.30
Dutch .....	2.50
Scots .....	2.00
Scandinavians .....	2.00
Jews, Spanish and others.....	5.30



WATERFORD, OLDEST INCORPORATED VILLAGE IN NEW YORK STATE.

Clement Realty Photo





## CHAPTER TWO

### THE GEOLOGY OF WATERFORD

WATERFORD'S HILLS, its low ground, and its swamps too, all tell of glacial days. Geologists report that period as being from ten to thirty-five thousand years ago. Only the Hudson River, millions of years older can be traced before the era. The Cohoes Falls, and the Mohawk delta, consisting of four branches or "sprouts" were also made in the Pleistocene or glacial period. This was marked by a great ice sheet moving this way from the Labrador region. The ice mass was split in two by the Adirondack mountains, one of the oldest rock formations of the world.

One sheet came down the Champlain-Hudson trough. The other traveled west of the Adirondacks following the Iro-Mohawk river path which existed before the St. Lawrence River was formed. This pre-glacial Mohawk drained Lake Iroquois, the huge predecessor of Lake Ontario. It entered the Hudson River below Albany. The great ice mass ushering in the last glacial period, covered most of New York State and was almost a mile thick. Its weight was so great that it upset the earth's crust for a depth of sixty miles, drowning the lower Hudson Valley and brought tide water to Troy. (Cook,<sup>1</sup> 1930) Finally the climate grew warmer and the swollen rivers, the Iro-Mohawk, the Hudson and the Hoosick, began pouring their waters against the glacier which blocked the Hudson valley. The water rose and formed the immense Lake Albany which extended from Rhinebeck on the south, north to Fort Edward and westward to Schenectady. (Woodworth<sup>2</sup> 1905) Even Waterford's Prospect Hill lay 160 feet beneath its surface. The moulding sands of Halfmoon, once valued as far west as the Pacific coast for casting making, resulted from the settled waters of this Lake Albany. The sand bank desposits near Prospect Hill

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1 *Geology of Capital District*, Ruedemann, 1930.

2 *Glacial Geology of Cohoes*, Nos. 215-216, J. H. Stoller, 1918, and Woodworth.

community are partly morainic accumulations formed in front of the ice lobe, plus water action. Hudson currents coming from the bend near Pleasantdale met the waters overflowing eastward from the Mohawk down the present Barge Canal valley. The collision of the waters doubtless threw together this great mass of stones, coarse gravel, dark and yellow sand.

Observant Waterfordians are aware of Waterford's two levels or terraces. Prospect Hill for example is on the higher terrace, while Broad and Third Streets are on the lower.

These different elevations are traceable to the flooding by Lake Albany. The formation of the two terraces was as follows. The upper terrace, (Prospect Hill) in the main, was laid down while the uplands had been bared of ice, but while a broad ice lobe still lingered in the Hudson. Tributary streams carrying sediments against the ice lobe built up the higher terrace. Its top layer of fine sediment was deposited by the waters of Lake Albany.

The lower terrace (Broad Street) was deposited partly from the debris of the ice lobe and partly from sediments of streams discharging into Lake Albany before its subsistence.<sup>3</sup>

As the water drained off the higher levels it cut many ravines beginning at "Slades Hollow" and extending north of Waterford. The numerous swamps about the town, "Kerwin's," for example, east of Prospect Hill, and those near King's canal and elsewhere are a result of the final drainage of water from the higher terraces. The first history of Waterford states that "near the post office it was filled in twelve feet" to cover swampy land. (The early Dutch settlers on their first Waterford maps, called these wet spots "croepellboss's" or "flys.") The Northside section is rocky. It was swept clear of its original glacial clay by the overflowing Mohawk River. In late glacial times this river flowed some eighty feet higher than it does now in the present gorge. The plateau northwest of Northside, with an elevation of about 200 feet is seemingly composed of clay. It is not however. Beneath it is actually Normanskill shale, the top surfaces being turned into clay by weathering.

The Cohoes Falls, born during glacial times, are a result of the

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<sup>3</sup> *Glacial Geology of Cohoes*, Nos. 215-216, J. H. Stoller, 1918.

great volume of Mohawk water being poured against the Hudson's melting glacier, near Albany. Obstructed and unable to deliver its burden, the Iroquois-Mohawk overflowed its valley as far north as Ballston. Its final break through against a rock wall took place at the Aqueduct, near Schenectady, and also locally at Crescent.

Thus was formed the Cohoes Falls in post glacial times, in the struggle of the powerful Mohawk River to again join its mate, the Hudson. An interesting feature of the famous seventy foot Cohoes Falls is the slow recession they have made in advancing 2000 feet upstream in from 10,000 to 35,000 years.<sup>4</sup> Niagara Falls, formed about the same time, has moved upstream from seven to eight miles since glacial days. Cohoes Falls has moved more slowly, due to the tipped position of its bed rock layers. Instead of lying horizontal, like Niagara's, they tip upward on an angle of about 70 degrees. It is more difficult for water action to remove rock so positioned.

The potholes both in the bed of the 120 foot deep Mohawk gorge and atop it are a special feature, one gorge pot hole being 25 feet deep. These holes came into existence because of the dissimilar hardness of the shale and sandstone of that area. A recess is first formed in a soft portion, in which stone and coarse material lodge. The river current revolves this material and the hole deepens. The writer examined a number of these Mohawk pot holes during a dry period and found such stone drilling agents in position. It was observed that one stone had once been imbedded in the sidewall of the hole and had fallen to the pit bottom to begin its work.

In the year 1866 the Cohoes Harmony Company was excavating atop the cliff near Vliet Street to build Harmony Mill No. 3. In several adjoining potholes they found the nearly complete skeleton of a prehistoric animal some twenty feet long.

The printed report by James Hall, L.L.D.,<sup>6</sup> covering this Cohoes Mastodon (*American Giganteus*),<sup>5</sup> carefully states that the skeletal remains were not found in pot holes made by the present Mohawk river. Hall points out that the top of cliff pot holes were formed before the present Mohawk gorge existed, and that they were either

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<sup>4</sup> *Twenty-first Annual Regents Report*, April 20, 1868, p. 137.

<sup>5</sup> *University of State of New York. 1784-1884. F. B. Hough, p. 750.*

<sup>6</sup> *Twenty-first Annual Regents Report*, April 20, 1868.



glacial or pre-glacial, the Mohawk itself at this spot being post-glacial. He further states that they were made by some force which operated from the north to the south. He logically distinguishes between "ancient" and modern pot holes, and his five surveyors prove that none of the "ancient" holes was found in the post glacial Mohawk gorge. These were present, however on top of and beyond the summit of the cliffs, thirteen being in the "Northside" and others on the Cohoes side of the river.

The Mastodon, now in the New York State Museum at Albany, was actually the skeleton of an elephant, and was found 300 feet shoreward atop and beyond the gorges southwest cliff. The remains rested in an "ancient" pothole on rocks and debris, 60 feet down, the pit bottom not being reached, but estimated as being 100 feet.

Since these events of 1866, geologists now realize that a great and ancient river once flowed from the north-east, at a time when what is now Albany<sup>7</sup> was a mile or more higher than it is to-day. Dr. Stoller,<sup>8</sup> writing in 1918 says, "it must be remembered that the Mohawk river flows across the ancient rock valley of the Hudson; that this Hudson valley was from four to five miles wide, with an inner gorge, two miles in width." He further states that the west rim of this inner Hudson gorge was the first site of the Cohoes Falls as Mohawk glacial waters poured down the Hudson's side. The place of the first falls can still be seen from the Cohoes side of the Mohawk.

This detailed account of ancient pot holes is to permit this author to establish for the first time that the 1866 Cohoes Mastodon "Giganteus" was found in the inner gorge of the Hudson and not in the Mohawk as published for nearly a hundred years. It is obvious that the remains, being found 300 feet beyond the deep Mohawk gorge and atop its cliffs, could never have been deposited by the waters of the Mohawk river. The astute Dr. Hall and his men proved this, but they did not then know of the great width of the ancient Hudson river and its valley.

It remained for Dr. Stoller and his work of 1918 to clear up the items which had puzzled Dr. Hall. To these scientific men of

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<sup>7</sup> *Geology of Capital District*, Ruedemann, 1930.

<sup>8</sup> *Glacial Geology, The Cohoes Quadrangle*, Stoller, 1918, Nos. 215-216.



perspicacity, we owe the clues which led to the final unraveling of the truth. It occurs that no one has happened to pair up these two Hall-Stoller studies written a half century apart. The answer is now easy for even an amateur geologist to decipher.

A few words may clarify this Hudson-Mohawk situation. The ancient Hudson originally passed near Cohoes perhaps on an angle of 30 degrees east of north. Its inner gorge would have cut angularly through the future path of the Mohawk some 2000 feet below the present 1955 falls, at about 40 degrees. "The Hudson's outer (extreme west) boundary was on towards Crescent where the Mohawk broke through a ridge. The local Mohawk gorge formation at Cohoes and Northside, tends to produce potholes. Those of the greatest size and depth are called "ancient" by Dr. Hall and are all beyond and outside the Mohawk gorge. The largest is in Northside, it being a swamp filled ellipse, 136 feet by 170 feet."<sup>9</sup> All these holes outside the Mohawk gorge were made by the Hudson river in its earliest days. Then came the glacier made Mohawk, cutting through the old Hudson river bed, leaving the Mastodon high, buried and untouched, on the west side of the new Mohawk gorge which has now been cut 120 feet deep by the continued rushing waters of thousands of years.

The delta of the Mohawk below the falls has four separate mouths or "Sprouts" the fourth or northern separating Waterford and Peebles Island. The word "Sprout" has continued in Waterford since the days of the Dutch. It means "spreutum" or stream. These four streams of the Mohawk, harried in their effort to rejoin the Hudson, once flowed around no less than fourteen islands. During the past years, two or more islands have entirely vanished by river erosion.

The three main islands are Green, VanSchaick and Peebles. The last two are prominent in colonial military history, while Peebles Island itself is reminiscent of the Stone Age, Moenminne's 1600 Castle of the Mahicans having been located there.

The underlying rock of Waterford Village is Snake Hill shale.

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<sup>9</sup> Map, R. Bell, Sept. 1867, N. Y. State Museum Twenty-first Annual Report.

It is dark gray to black, sometimes bluish and gray. It is agrillaceous (clayey) shale.

The high ground of the Northside section from the Sugar Loaf pond north to the States Canal Shops, consists of Normanskill shale. It is somewhat older than Snake Hill but quite similar. It is harder, having grits and cherts. Both these rocks are of the Ordovician period which began some 420 million years ago. Nature, by sun and frost, pulverizes these hard shales for man's benefit. For an interesting view denoting the passage of centuries, stand on the river's edge near "King's" ditch beyond Dial City and look eastward across the Mohawk at the high rock cliffs of Peebles Island. At the top can be seen four or more feet where the surface of Snake Hill shale has been changed to soil since glacial days.

It is fertile soil too, containing four per cent potash,  $16\frac{1}{2}\%$  aluminum oxide, and 15/100% phosphoric acid. Snake Hill shale was once ground to powder and sold to improve sandy soils by a Mechanicville firm.

## CHAPTER THREE

### OUR INDIANS

THE MAHICAN or "River" Indians, as our ancient New York Documentary History calls them, occupied this area when Henry Hudson arrived in 1609. They were of the Algonquin race and used the same language as the Mohicans, of Connecticut. Not far to the West lived their fierce and long time enemies the Mohawks, of the Iroquois nation who then seldom came east of Schoharie. The Dutch were adroit traders and easily lived in peace with the natives except for the VanKriekebeek incident in 1626.

This was a diplomatic Dutch error and was quite similar to the one made by Champlain some 17 years earlier which had an extraordinary climax.

The Mahicans somehow persuaded the Fort Orange commandant to join with them in an attack upon their hereditary enemies, the Mohawks, who had been attracted eastward by Dutch muskets and trade goods. The Mohawks were easily the better warriors. They killed the Dutch Van Kriekebeek, cooked and devoured a companion and put the whole Mahican-Dutch attacking force to flight. The Mohawks were angry with the Dutch for taking sides, and verbally rebuked them. The incident almost closed Fort Orange until the arrival of Barentsen, the chief fur trader of the Dutch West India Company. Considering that Fort Orange's first winter's fur shipment to Holland sold for about twelve thousand dollars, the Dutch promptly patched up a peace with the Mohawks. This incident caused a new Mahican-Mohawk war, however, which lasted 43 years. It caused the death of Chief Moeneminnes whose castle was then located on Haver (Oat) Island which later came into possession of the Peebles and finally became part of Waterford. The Mahicans finally tired of warfare, sold to Van Rensselaer in 1630 the tract extending up to Castle Moeneminnes. In this 43 year war the Mahicans were outnumbered in battle, but went to their kin, the

New England Indians for help. These kin folk returned in numbers and helped the Mahicans defeat the Mohawks under Chief Kryn near Hoffmans, in 1669. The Mahicans then returned to this region and united with the Hoosicks. They took the name Scaticooks, signifying the "Mingling of the Waters" doubtless meaning the waters of the Hudson, which were joined nearby by the Hoosick River. Their camp ground was at the "Vale of Peace" near the Knickerbacker Mansion.

Most interesting were the thoughts of these Mahican Indians as they looked upon the ship Halfmoon, the first white man's vessel they had seen. Some 145 years later, while pleading with the whites for help to live, they revealed these long buried thoughts.<sup>1</sup> It seems that some young Mahicans were beside the Hudson's shore on that warm September day in 1609. Seeing Hudson's vessel they dashed up the hill to their castle, saying "that they had seen a great fish."

Their wiser fathers after a glance said "it was a boat, with men in it." Both the Indians ashore and the sailors aboard were jumpy after that first glance, and both drew their weapons. Be it ever to the credit of the Indians, they made the first peaceful gesture. They put away, they said, "their arrows and became friends."

The Mahican Indians were a rather short people and generally peaceful. Being more gentle too, they were generally despised by the warlike Mohawks who described them as "those who stammer and speak a strange tongue."<sup>2</sup> The Mahicans occupied both banks of the Hudson from Catskill Creek to Lake Champlain, and eastward to the valley of the Housatonic.

The Mahican Indians' "Castle" Moeneminnes on Haver Island was more than a mere stronghold. Such places were usually palisaded and were strong, firm, structures atop a flatted hill and usually near a stream. Inside the palisade were from twenty to thirty "houses." These were communal homes and differed only in length, being less than 20 feet wide, but sometimes longer than 100 feet.

They were made of long saplings, usually hickory, set in the ground in two opposite rows. The tops of the poles were bent and

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<sup>1</sup> *Documentary History of New York*, 1849, Vol. II, p. 598.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



secured together like a garden arbor. The sides and roof of the structure which had a single door, were covered with bark. The roof had a single smoke opening.<sup>3</sup> The location of Moenminnes Castle where we supposed it to be, was adroitly chosen, and hints of an intelligence akin to that of the whites. Its position on Haver Island was actually an observation point for all four outlets of the Mohawk River, the main branch of which was the approach lane of their deadly enemies, the Mohawks.

Without doubt the Mahicans lived heavily upon the fish and native clams of the Hudson River. Homer Folger, local archeologist, once found buried by flood and time great mounds of clam shells, artifacts, and burials too, on the nearby Van Schaick Island flats.

We now consider, for James Fennimore Cooper's benefit, the difference between the so called Mahican and the Mohican Indians, considering that the author Cooper mixes them, and because Indian expert Swanton warns<sup>4</sup> that the Mohicans (of Connecticut) should not be confused with the Mahicans of our State. However, since both belonged to the Algonquin linguistic family (both names being mere varieties of the same word) we, for common sense sake, line up with Cooper. We owe him for a fine book which has perpetuated the name of these first New Yorkers, which latter term of course, includes the Mohawks. The Mahicans' original council fire (or capital) was on an island at Schodack near Albany. They had a population of about 3000 in 1600, before wars and civilization scattered them.

Further support may be given Cooper by the supposition that in the beginning, the Mohicans were a branch of the Mahicans, the final point which distinguished them being that the Mohicans settled near the Thames River in Connecticut. The Mohican Chieftan Uncas became historically celebrated on account of the services he gave to the whites. Seven places in the United States honor Uncas and both the Mahicans and Mohicans for this kindness.<sup>5</sup> These Mohicans, with the closely related Pequots, numbered less than 2500 in 1643.

The Mohawks of the Iroquois, because of their vigorous men-

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<sup>3</sup> *Handbook of American Indians*, F. W. Hodge, 1907, p. 788.

<sup>4</sup> *The Indian Tribes of North America*, J. R. Swanton, 1952, p. 41.

<sup>5</sup> *Indian Tribes of North America*, J. R. Swanton, 1952, pp. 30 and 42.

tality and life, together with their association with the Six Nation confederacy, reached a high degree of civilization and wrote their name prominently in history.

Partly agriculturists, they lived in long bark covered houses, when not on the war path. They raised corn, pumpkins, beans and tobacco, the latter said to have been brought here from Mexico. The Mohawks were taller than the Mahicans and were self-sufficient. The near libel that the Indian women did all the work, probably came from Champlain, who said that the squaw was "'the Indian's mule'; she did all the gardening."

The Mohawks made earthen pots for cooking, contrived stone and bone implements, made canoes, cured skins and for a pastime smoked pipes. For sewing they saved and dressed sinews and also made twine for their nets from Indian hemp.

The art of making maple sugar was obtained by the whites from the Indians who had made it for ages before the whites came. They did not use salt. They preserved for winter, nuts, beans, charred corn and the like which were kept dry by burying them in bark-lined pits covered by skins. For long trips and war expeditions, they made pemmican. This was meat, cut fine, and mixed with deer or bear fat and berries. It was eaten without cooking. Clothing was scanty. In the summer the warriors wore loin cloths and the women had short skirts. Furs and skin garments were used in the winter.

One early story by a white tells of seeing an Indian brave plunging forward in a winter storm, bare except for his summer garb, with only an animal skin held shieldlike against one side of his body to ward off the wintry blast.

Located near Waterford at the General Electric Silicone plant was once an Algonquin (Mahican) "Costal" Indian site, estimated to be well over a thousand years old. Near the west end of Middle Street once was an Indian burying ground.

This was pointed out by one of Waterford's earliest residents, Brainard King. He said that many stone implements had been uncovered there when our village was first being settled. This doubtless followed a Mahican burial custom of giving the departed one hunting points, cooking utensils, and the tools he would need until

that time when he would cross the great divide, on the way to the "happy hunting" grounds.

The whites had a loose way of calling these people savages, forgetting in many cases that they had admirable qualities which are still quite rare among us.

An outstanding instance of this fact is revealed by the forgiveness that these aboriginies extended to each other. In 1756 the Mahicans settled in Broome and Tioga counties of this State under the protection of their former bitter enemies the Iroquois.<sup>6</sup>

And more striking, too, is the remarkable scene enacted in nearby Schaghticoke where after nearly a half century of war between the Mohawks and the Mahicans, we find that with no more persuasion than that used by an alien English governor (with an axe to grind) these once warring tribes enacted the following drama of "burying the hatchet."

In 1676 the English Governor Andros, amid a great Indian throng, sought to bring a lasting peace between the hereditary enemies, the Mohawk Indians and the Mahican "Scaticooks." The assembly met under amiable terms and planted two white oak trees, one for the Mohawks and another for the Scaticooks. These were "Trees of Peace." The Mohawks' tree died early but the Scaticooks' tree lived and thrived well into its third century.<sup>7</sup> This peace tree was planted on what became the ancestral estate of the Knickerbackers at Old Schaghticoke. The meeting carried the name of the "Witenagemot" an English word signifying "The Assembly of the Wise," which is, of course, a fitting title for any peace assembly. While given ample tree surgery by the late John Knickerbacker, the peace tree was uprooted by a flash flood of the Hoosick River late in 1948.

This extremely tough white oak's historical past certainly merited preservation and the author secured a large limb. Then parts were fashioned into symbolical large arrow points and presented both to the Saratoga County and the Troy Historical Associations.

Waterford's "Battery" at Front Street is shown on an early map as being an "Indian Encampment." Years ago, old people told

<sup>6</sup> *The Indian Tribes of North America*, 1952, J. R. Swanton, p. 42.

<sup>7</sup> *The Hoosick Valley*, G. G. Niles, 1912, p. 53.



the writer that this spot was visited each summer or fall season by the Indians who returned to sell baskets and other items. Corroboration of this was later found in the Ormsby diary, mentioned later.

In 1825 came the Erie Canal. Travelers on the "packets" which sailed its waters, recount seeing Indians running on the tow paths and watching with interest that new mode of travel.

As late as July 4, 1806 the Stockbridge (Mahican) Indians also visited Troy and after too much Troy rum engaged in a riot among themselves. Troy records show amazement over the vitality of a wounded Indian whose head smashed by a blow, refused anything like an anesthetic, while bits of his skull were being removed.

We have too, the touching story of Sacham Waghawawat of the Scaticooks who pleaded in 1700 that Albany send no more rum to the "Scook," asking at the same time that land be plowed there to plant "Corne." (*Annals of Albany.*)

The Indian story is sad, for the uphill fight against liquor was a failure. So it came about that these poor people, whose land we took, were finally ruined by the rum of unprincipled traders whom Benjamin Franklin so aptly called vicious. By 1754 most of the forest people had become wards of the colonies, and by 1790 all the lands of the Iroquois had passed from the red men to the white.

### OUR MODERN INDIANS

Most readers like the sequel to a story and few endings are more interesting than the 1948 condition of the aboriginal people we found about us in the early days.

At first cultural changes from European contact began. While the Indians had excellent flint mines at both Coeymans and Ticonderoga, the natives began to trade their goods for heavy copper kettles which some then fashioned into arrow points. The arrow was a deadly missile. Modern tests recently published in a magazine stated that arrow speeds of better than 100 miles an hour have been recorded. But eventually, the most esteemed thing in their lives was a good rifle which most of them managed to get.

As time passed, men of Indian blood rose to high estate. Such men have been most valuable in deciphering the history and customs of their ancestors. Dr. A. C. Parker, a Seneca and a lifetime arche-



ologist, is among the leaders. Others like Ely Parker,<sup>8</sup> and Jim Thorpe, a world-renowned athlete, have reflected honor upon a brave and able race of men.

Of our own Indians it has been said, "The Indians of New York have been classified by the Indian Bureau as among the most advanced of the nation—and in need of no government supervision or control." (House of Rep. Report No. 2720, July 1950) Again "one half of the Indians leave the reservations daily, for employment, schooling and etc." (Leg. Doc. No. 39, N. Y. State, 1949). Finally in 1953 the State Dept. of Education is planning to integrate the society of the Indians and the whites. Three reservation schools are already abandoned and no law exists to bar Indians from public schools.

The Indians of New York State have been allotted a total of 85,178 acres of land, which is occupied by 6,673 people of either pure or partly Indian blood. This population figure does not include the number of Indians on the Oneida Reservation near Syracuse and those on the Shinnecock Reservation on Long Island. Omitted also is the count of the Abenaki group near Lake George, which is part of the Indian remnant resulting from Ranger Robert Roger's St. Francis raid in 1759.

The New York State Social Welfare Law is responsible, financially, for the care, relief and support of needy Indians on Reservations and for all dependent Indians, on or off Indian lands, the same as any other people. The Federal Government too gives per capita payments each year to Indians under old treaty terms. These are to perpetually pay for taking the Indians' land.

Indian reservations are exempt from taxation so long as the land remains the property of the nation, tribe or band occupying it. (1951, N. Y. S. *Manual*.)

The Indians are distributed in eight reservations in N. Y. State. The Iroquois, 4,365 in number, are located on six reservations, i.e. The Cattaraugus, Allegany, Tuscarora, Tonawanda, Onondaga and

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<sup>8</sup> *The Yorker*, 1953 and Ely Parker, a Seneca of the Iroquois Confederation, became Master of Miners Masonic Lodge, 273, in Galena, Ill. He subsequently became the first Master of Akron Lodge, 527.—From *Empire State Mason*, April 1955, p. 29.

the St. Regis. It is said that the six Iroquois tribes on these reservations, have retained to a remarkable degree their native speech, religion, and many aboriginal customs and traditions. Of the 4365 Iroquois, 1570 are full-blooded.

On the Cattaraugus reservation live 2000 Indians, mainly Senecas and others. They are steel workers, mechanics, farmers, trappers and fishermen. They get an annual treaty stipend. Methodists and Baptists have missions there.

Allegany reservation has 900 Senecas one-half of whom speak Seneca. N. Y. State appoints an attorney to guard their legal interests since they lease oil land to the whites.

The Tuscarora reservation is near Niagara Falls and has 430 Indians who are farmers. They have a community house, a school, and a Baptist church. All are Christians but retain their old time language, council, and tribal laws.

Tonawonda reservation, near Akron, N. Y. has 600 Senecas. A third are "Long House"<sup>9</sup> followers. (A mixture of native and Christian elements.) Lifetime Chiefs govern through councils. Half of their number speak or understand Seneca. Baptist and Methodist missions are here.

The Onondaga reservation near Syracuse, has 700 Indians composed of 200 Oneidas, Cayugas and others. Onondaga is still spoken. Less than 100 of the total are full-bloods, 490 are Christians.

The St. Regis reservation is on the St. Lawrence and the Canadian border and 2800 Indians, mostly Mohawks live here. About 100 are full-bloods, the rest mixed. They are governed by three elected chiefs and pay no taxes. They receive free medical care and schooling. Most are dairy farmers, steel workers, and lumbermen. Methodist, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic missions have labored among these people and none of the Indians are pagans. The Mohawk language is still spoken.

Finally, there are five remnants of Algonquin Indians on Long Island, consisting of a few hundred of mixed blood. There are also other remnants of 17 tribes throughout the State, some living in Rensselaer County.

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<sup>9</sup> *The Code of Handsome Lake, Seneca Prophet*, by Albert Parker, N. Y. S. Museum Bulletin No. 163, 1913.

Of the New York State Indians, 88 8/10 per cent of those ten years or older, were literate in 1948. (Smithsonian Institute report of 1948.)

How has the passage of 185 years affected the population of that remarkable Indian Confederacy known as the "Five Nations?" This group was formed about 400 to 500 B.C. according to David Cusick. He states that this Iroquois union was practically a republic, founded on much the same lines as the United States. The Iroquois did not seek to exterminate their foes, but sought to subjugate and adopt them and perhaps in their feeble way, to enlighten them. This confederacy once dominated a large portion of the present United States. They composed the hardiest and most intelligent Indian group on the American continent. They had thoroughly earned their title, "The Romans of the West."

Bonney<sup>10</sup> tells how the Mohawks by sheer warlike action added the Tuscaroras to their numbers, making it the Six Nations' Confederation. Living in North Carolina the Tuscaroras were attacked by the Cherokees. The Mohawks went to Carolina, gave the Cherokees a stinging defeat and brought the entire Tuscaroras tribe to New York State.

Sir William Johnson took a census of the Six Nations in 1763 and said they numbered 1950 men.

To get some idea of the present Six Nation population we are justified in tripling Johnson's census to allow for wives and family members. Thus we have a probable population of 5850 souls. In 1948 the Smithsonian Institute gives the total Iroquois a figure of 4365. If this should be an actual loss of 25 per cent, it could be attributed to the American way of life.

The Seneca tribe shows an interesting fact. Among the Indians they seem to have maintained a majority of numbers since 1763, when they had 1050 men. Again tripling their number for normal family life, they may have numbered 3150 persons in 1763. The 1948 figure of the Senecas was about 3500 people.

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10 *A Legacy of Historical Gleanings* (Bonney).



## THE MOHAWK INDIANS OF 1954

The Mohawks were the crack warriors of this area and it is fitting to give an account of how they are meeting civilization, six and a half centuries after they entered New York State.<sup>11</sup> These were of the aggressive Iroquois of the Long House, united in a remarkable confederacy founded by Hiawatha and Dedanawida.

In the strength of that union they fought and vanquished the other Indians in this State. For the first time meeting and surprised by the white man's guns in the hands of Samuel de Champlain, the Iroquois thenceforth seemed to hate the French and played a vivid part in the four wars between France and England. Their allegiance to the English was maintained by Sir William Johnson, who lived among them, treated them fairly, and married an Indian wife. They were in a sad fix when the Revolution came, and, remaining loyal to the British, they finally received a terrific blow from the devastating 1779 expedition of Generals James Clinton and John Sullivan.

In treaty after treaty the white man bought the redskins' land and these Indians, the Mahican and the Iroquois, who were our first native New York Staters, always seemed at a disadvantage. Red Jacket, a mighty orator and a Seneca chief, hated the white man and all his works, and not without reason. He spoke constantly to his people against the sale of Indian lands. The climax came in 1797 when Red Jacket refused outright to sell a great land tract near Seneca Lake. The great white "statesmen" went behind his back and with rich presents for the Indian women, won over a fellow Seneca chieftain Corn-planter, thus winning for the white man a great tract of land in central New York.

An imposing monument to Red Jacket<sup>12</sup> and five Seneca chiefs interred with him is to be seen in Buffalo, N. Y. erected by the Buffalo Historical Society.

Now, after a lapse of three and a half centuries, we review the lives of the descendants of our local Mohawks, and bring to light from Canada a modern finale that might well be expected. These scions from the Six Nation Confederation are as steady nerved

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<sup>11</sup> *The Yorker*, Sept.-Oct. 1954, Vol. XIII, No. 1, p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> *History of the Iroquois*, Wm. H. Beauchamp, 1904, p. 428.



and use as boldly the modern tools of America, as did their ancestors the bow, arrow and rifle to win wars. An official Canadian letter states "The Iroquois Indians of Caughnawaga Canada are considered the best iron workers in North America. In regard to the Mohawks living at Caughnawaga Reserve, there are about 3300 members of the band. The majority of the male members are construction steel workers in the U. S. and Canada. Some members have become doctors, lawyers, priests and nuns and are a credit to our community."<sup>13</sup>

*Bethlehem Steel Review* too, praises these fearless men who think nothing of walking along and working on a 12 inch strip of steel, hundreds of feet above the ground with nothing but nerve and the rail to keep them there.

The knowledge that the Mohawks had no fear of heights was brought out nearly seventy years ago when the Canadian National Railway was putting a bridge across the St. Lawrence River.

To get Canadian land rights for the bridge which landed on the Caughnawaga Indian Reservation, the builders agreed to hire the Mohawks as laborers. As the bridge section extended high above the water, the ex-seamen erection crews found the Mohawks close behind them.

Thus Mohawk father and sons for about seventy years have been riveters and construction workers for the Bethlehem Steel Company. But the call of the wild still lurks in the blood of these men. Between jobs they drift back to the St. Lawrence, one saying, "It's awful pleasant along the St. Lawrence from June to Labor Day," for this worker has a home, a beach, and a fishing boat waiting for him there.<sup>14</sup>

For our readers, new in Indian lore, it should be said that the original "Caughnawaga" was the nearest Mohawk Castle to Albany (at Fonda) on the south bank of the Mohawk prior to the year 1666. Following the work of the Jesuit Fathers among the Mohawks, a mission, St. Francis Xavier, was established for converts at La Prairie in 1668. Later, after moving several times, the Reservation was established in 1719 at Canada's Caughnawaga on Sault St.

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<sup>13</sup> *Canadian Department of Citizenship and Immigration Letter*, Indian Affairs, Br., Nov. 17, 1954.

<sup>14</sup> *Bethlehem Review*, Bethlehem Steel Co., 1954, pp. 24-25.

Louis on the St. Lawrence, Province of Quebec.<sup>15</sup> The latter is now the burial place of the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha, "The Lily of the Mohawks," a Christianized Indian maiden who was born not far from Waterford in the Mohawk Country.

### THE MAHICAN INDIANS OF 1954

We now give the last obtainable account of these first New Yorkers who were kind to Hudson and whose homes and castle were in and about our place.

Their government was a democracy and their religion followed that of other Indians. The women were fond of adornment but they were modest.<sup>16</sup>

They were scattered by wars incident to the coming of the whites. Before the latter arrived, the Indians had, after fights with the Mohawks reached a peaceful status, similar to that found among odd-sized boys, growing up. They knew the limitations of warfare.

The inroads of the Mohawks during a war, caused them to move their council fire from Schodack to Stockbridge, Mass. Selling their territory piecemeal from 1630 to 1730, some went to Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana. Others settled in Schaghticoke. After departing from that place they returned on occasions, to observe certain dances, one resembling that of the Green Corn dance of the Eastern tribes.<sup>17</sup> A few Mahicans, no doubt filled with the memories of happier years, still remained about their ancient Hudson River homes until the Revolution, when they disappeared, quite unnoticed.

Those living in the Housatonic valley were gathered into a mission at Stockbridge, Mass., where they maintained a separate existence under the name of the Stockbridge Indians. These are the only Mahicans who have preserved their identity.<sup>18</sup>

In reviewing the final pages of Indian history of these two native tribes, the Mohawks and the Mahicans, we are impressed by the old saying that "Blood will tell." The Mohawks, always fighters,

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15 *Historic Caughnawaga*, 1922, E. J. Devine, S. J.

16 *History of Albany*, A. J. Weise, 1884, p. 9.

17 *Handbook of American Indians*, F. W. Hodge, Part One, 1907, p. 926.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 786.

and part of that group known as the "Romans of the West," have marked their descendants with all those fearless qualities. We find them fully supporting this background in 1955.

The Mahican, gentler in nature, has his historical place firmly fixed too, but in literature. Swanton, an acknowledged Indian authority, says that the "Mahican tribe has probably attained more fame from its appearance in Cooper's novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*, than from any circumstances connected with its history."<sup>19</sup>

Probably the greatest innocent astonishment ever bestowed upon North American Indians was given a Sioux tribe in 1832 by that pioneer among the Indians, George Catlin<sup>20</sup> The latter was an expert artist who brought us Indian close-ups both in letter and drawings. Among these were likenesses posed by two Indian chiefs. Somehow Catlin managed to keep these from their view until entirely finished.

When these were unveiled the two Mandan Indians, seeing their picture for the first time, were mightily astonished. Walking up to the painter, in a most gentle manner, with head and eyes downward, and taking Catlin's hand in a firm grip, one of the chiefs said, in tones, little above a whisper, the word TE-HO-PE-NEE-WASH-EE, and walked away. At the time Catlin did not imagine what a great honor had been thrust upon him, for the word meant, "WHITE MEDICINE MAN." After this brief ceremony the chiefs stalked to their wigwams and after smoking the customary pipe or two, broke the news of the paintings to their people. Immediately, hundreds of Indians commenced a parade in front of the artist tent, peeking in as they went.

Finally when Catlin showed the likeness to the entire tribe, part of them turned into a howling mob. Some remained mute as they watched the eyes in the paintings, which always seemed to follow their gaze.

Still others of the tribe gave vent to their feelings by thrusting their spears into the ground, or shot red arrows at the sun.

A bit later Catlin was feted, being given a rattle and a wand

<sup>19</sup> *Indian Tribes of North America*, 1952, J. R. Swanton, p. 42.

<sup>20</sup> *Letters, Manners and Customs, North American Indians*, 1841, Volume I, George Catlin, pp. 105, 106, 107.



adorned with grizzly bear claws and finally had a dog killed for him. All these items constituted the medicine man's equipment. This award and honor permitted Catlin to spend eight years among the western tribes which resulted in the first scientific study of these aborigines.

### THE INDIAN CLIMAX

The author, a member of an active archaeologist exploring society for a score of years, and a student of local Indian affairs since boyhood, has arrived at the conclusion that the Indians were more sinned against than sinning.

The Mohawks, for example, were firm and loyal friends of Sir William Johnson and the colonists, until influenced by the Revolution, while the Mahicans' record with the Dutch was one of unbroken peace.

The war and its strategy for possession of North America between the French and the English involved, with premeditation, the Indians of both Canada and the Colonies. The Revolution followed and resulted in the banishment of the Mohawks from their former home and friends. The whites accordingly bear the responsibility for the massacre at Schenectady, Cherry Valley, and the Jane McCrea tragedy.

So it came about that our Indian troubles were largely associated with the wars and political intrigues of our European friends, the sins of our traders, and land hungry colonial leaders.

Coming down the Champlain-Hudson valley from Canada with Burgoyne in 1777 were Ottawa Indians. They were on a real commando war raid, unrestrained by either correct white teachings or influence.

The author chooses to close this chapter on "Our Indians" by showing the great power of religion and Christianity which miraculously transformed this group of war inspired bloodthirsty humans into friends within an hour.

The following story is true, having been published by the Quakers and verified by a New York State historical marker. The scene was on the beautiful hillside of the Hudson Valley a few miles from Waterford, near Easton.



CANADIAN OTTAWA WARRIORS, MEET LOCAL  
QUAKERS AT EASTON, N. Y.

It was mid-week Meeting house-day in nearby Easton Township one bright summer morning in 1777. High above the beautiful Hudson in a log cabin, not far from "Barkers Grove" (in 1955), was a crude shelter where the "Friends" met for worship. Although they knew that part of Burgoyne's 500 reportedly bloodthirsty Ottawa warriors<sup>21</sup> were roaming their countryside, they met to greet visiting Friend Robert Nesbit and to worship God, as was their custom. At the head of the meeting was grandfather Zebulon Hoxie with the boys and girls too, who peered anxiously at the thick woods which still surround the place in 1955. Friend Nesbit who had walked for two days from East Hoosack to address the group, arose and said, "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him;<sup>22</sup> you have done well to stay valiantly in your homes when all your neighbors have fled. These words of comfort and shelter are truly meant for you. Make them your own and you shall not be afraid of the terror by night or the arrow that flyeth by day."

Even as he had ceased talking a dozen Indians led by a Chief, all in full war paint and feathers came noiselessly from the wood-side with bows and arrows in hand and stood inside the door all ready to massacre the worshippers. The Friends, seeing them, sat on, in complete silence, without stirring. Grandfather Hoxie gazed full at the Chief who had first appeared.

The Indian gazed fiercely back into the Quaker's blue eyes. But from Hoxie's eyes must have come friendliness, for the Indian's eyes slowly fell and at his sign thirteen arrows were replaced in their quivers. Now continued one of the strangest Quaker meetings on record.<sup>23</sup> The Indians all sat down in meeting until the hour was up. Then Zebulon Hoxie with signs invited the Indian group to his house, putting before them bread and cheese.

With signs, most of the Indians gave thanks for the food, while the chief who knew a smattering of English and with plenty of ges-

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<sup>21</sup> *Burgoyne's Campaign*, Wm. L. Stone, 1877, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> Ninety-first Psalm.

<sup>23</sup> From *Fierce Feathers*, L. Violet Hodgkin, Friends Peace Committee, 304 Arch St., Philadelphia 6, Pa.

tures told of their first plan, which was to kill all the settlers. He said "Seeing white man sitting in house, no gun, no arrow, no knife—all quiet, worshipping Great Spirit. Then Great Spirit say to Indian, 'No kill them.' Then taking a white feather from one of his arrows, he placed it over the roof saying, "Indian friend! Indian all friends when see whitefeather."

Thus the Quakers proved that the power of love was stronger than the power of hate.

At South Easton Meeting House some few miles north of Schaghticoke's Fair Ground near the Quaker cemetery, is still the place of worship which has long since replaced the log cabin. Nearby are the graves of the Quaker worshippers who have gone to their rest. Thick evergreen trees rise amid the stones, and near the Meeting House, New York State's iron memorial sign will tell you,

"Friends Log Cabin Meeting House.  
Surrounded by Burgoyne's Indian  
Allies in 1777, but finding the Friends  
unarmed, "stacked their arms" and attended  
the Meeting peaceably."

At the home of the Friends<sup>24</sup> who revealed this episode to the author, they still keep a white feather above the door to daily support the valuable lesson which came from their people of earlier days. Direct descendants of this Indian Quaker meeting of 1777 still live in the Easton and Schaghticoke locality.

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<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Anna B. and Jacob Pratt, Riverlea Farms, Schaghticoke, N. Y.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FIRST DUTCH YEARS

WATERFORD has come a long way since the early days of the Dutch when just existing was a mighty task and the laws seemed but an accessory carved to fit special cases of offenses. Today our living is almost delicate and so refined that the breaking of a main electric power line stops our civilization; our homes then grow cold and dark and our meat unfreezes. In the cold days of 1690-1700, the men were kept warm by the necessity of cutting wood or flailing grain, while the women engaged in weaving or churning. Fireplaces then, as now, heated only one side of you, and at night, before use, the beds were warmed by hot coals inside long handled pans.

The laws of 1953 are generous—in number. Like De Morgan's fleas, they are ad infinitum. But not so at Albany<sup>1</sup> in 1652 under Stuyvesant, where simplicity was the order. Some time later, Albany's Daniel Van Olinda and his new first wife, Elizabeth, parted over a squabble as to just where to live. There being no Reno, the Mayor's Court simply ordered Elizabeth to rejoin Dan, simultaneously warning her father, Marte Creiger, against sheltering her. Perhaps it was a wise decision. A little Pieter arrived and was baptised within a year.<sup>2</sup>

The Mayor's Court was composed of a group actually called "Commies," together with several magistrates. The so-called Commies were the commissaries of Fort Orange. They acted as prosecuting officers while the Magistrates, selected by the people, gave the decisions and sentences.

### SETTLEMENT LIVING

In early settlements, like Fort Orange, each home had its garden, its well, a little green and at the door—always a tree. A great public farm plot, sufficient for the entire section placed not too far away,

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<sup>1</sup> Then called Fort Orange after the "Prince of Orange."

<sup>2</sup> *Annals of Albany*, Vol. III, p. 21.

furnished yellow corn for the slaves and cattle. Each family had its cow, all the cattle grazing together in a common pasture at the town's end. Nearby farmers furnished wheat and other needed grain for the settlement.

### LOG CABIN HOMES

These were simple homes located in the "Bush" and had but the bare necessities of life with no luxuries, a manner of living that tended to put a damper on culture. The pioneer's wife or his children milked the cow and harvested the hay. In rather rare cases there might also be with them a slave woman whose children, in after years, might prove to be a factor toward ease and comfort for these bush settlers.

Almost every Dutch home had its children, either natural or adopted, the latter always as well treated as the parent's own. The children of Dutch New Yorkers were reputed to have less restraint than those of the Puritans of New England. Albany was unique for the freedom granted its children. This placidity of Dutch life was attributed to their enjoyment of a better soil and a slightly better climate. Marriage occurred early, frequently at seventeen or twenty years of age. The manner of the Dutch in recording births—in the family Bible only, angered the English Governor Hunter in 1712 who said, "No register of births or deaths has been kept—that I can hear of." Births were announced by the simple method of hanging a pin cushion on the door knocker, a red cushion for a boy and white one for a girl.

Whatever the failings of the Dutch, they built up certain sterling qualities of life, for Chancellor James Kent (1763-1847) reported—"For more than one hundred years preceding the Revolution, no divorce took place in the colony of New York."

### THE CHILDREN

The children of these primitive beings (not one very rich or very poor) excited the study and comment of European travelers well over a hundred years ago.

The manner of their early living was supposed to be typical only of Albany until it was discovered that Albany customs and habits



had also existed many years before in Geneva, Switzerland. The children of Albany town were divided into groups of from five to six years of age, until marriageable. Each company (organized for outdoor life) had an equal number of boys and girls. An older and perhaps smarter boy or girl headed each of the several groups. They passed through the usual joys and tasks of childhood such as berry picking, as rival companies. Each child entertained the group on his or her birthday and again in the winter and spring. At such times the parents took a day off, leaving the care of the party to an older servant. At home, the girls made their own clothes, and those for the boys too. They also knit stockings, since all clothing was very dear and money scarce. The boys and girls generally married within the little groups in which they had grown up.<sup>3</sup>

### EARLY EDUCATION

In and before the early 1700's the education of girls in the vicinity of Albany was conducted on a very limited scale. They were taught to read in Dutch the Bible and a few devotional Calvinist tracts. Few of the Dutch girls could read English, and they were unable to speak it perfectly.

Of the education of the boys we have little to mention except that they grew to be like men at an early age. They were never without guns, and were soon in the woods securing the game which then abounded in this area. Many with ideas of marriage became traders, and loading canoes with trade goods, went hundreds of miles into the interior to obtain furs from the Indians. This rigorous living in the wilds had its effect and when they returned they were serious minded men, ready for almost any of the events of life.

### RELIGION

In 1709 Albany had both a Dutch and an Episcopal Church, the latter under the jurisdiction of the diocese of the Bishop of London.

It is said that the religion of the Dutch settlers gave stability to their infant colony. Their religion also resembled their original character, having little fervor or enthusiasm. Their manner in performing religious duties was calm, decent and without bigotry. But

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<sup>3</sup> *Men and Manners in America*, H. E. Scudder, 1887, p. 127.

one thing we know; they regarded the Indians as equal souls and kept unblemished every contract that they had made with the forest people. Their amity with both the Mahican and Mohawk tribes is an astonishing fact of history. Many hundred acres of land were peaceably exchanged between them in the years 1629 and 1647.

### GREAT GAME RESOURCES

The game supply of America was then at its zenith. In April and September mighty flocks of geese and ducks went winging up and down the Hudson Valley, with wild pigeons, too, almost darkening the sky. June was known as the sturgeon month. The Dutch thus had three periods when all the men and boys neglected every sober occupation for the enjoyment of these great game seasons.

### THE HIGH AND THE LOW

We have scanned the home life of the average Dutch Albany family, together with those commoners living in log cabins and in the wilds. The manner of living was doubtless identical with that of the residents of Halfmoon.

The one thing that they shared in common was hard and incessant work. The well-to-do, mostly in land values, were such as the Philip Schuylers. But they too had their burdens. For example, the constant coming and going of numerous guests and notables must have grown tiresome. Even the Indians and their wigwams were made welcome near the large Schuyler house on the "Flats,"<sup>4</sup> for these aborigines were useful to the Schuyler family. They furnished game for the guests and did other chores.

When the French and Indian war was in progress, the Schuyler house became a regular camping place for the armies going north. Almost all the officers were made welcome here and were furnished with articles of food.

These top Dutch leader families also had other drains upon their time, which today would be regarded as real drawbacks. The principal law courts were held in New York City and all their important provincial business was transacted there. This occasioned

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<sup>4</sup> Johannes Schuyler Jr., nineteenth Mayor of Albany and father of General Philip Schuyler was born at the Flatts, and Gen. Philip, himself, made his home here.

numerous trips to that place at a time when traveling was not easy. A single compensation was their friendship with New York families who sent them sea food and articles not obtainable here.

### THE SCHUYLERS

In the homes of the well-to-do, even such as the Schuylers, we find the very human complaint "the flies were a great nuisance; doors were kept closed to keep them out."<sup>5</sup>

The large house, capable of entertaining fifty or sixty guests a week, had great rooms. These were closed in the winter because of the heating problem. The family then moved into smaller winter quarters having great wooden burners and sunken rooms to conserve heat. In the summer time life was happy again. The larger rooms together with a great many bedrooms for the guests, were astir with happiness and laughter. Bird houses made from the skulls of animals and old perforated hats nailed to buildings, adorned the grounds.<sup>6</sup>

The soil of the garden spaces and nearby island, rich with the fertility of the Hudson overflow, needed no fertilizer, which, accumulating in the stables, was cast near or into the river. A host of Negro slaves and numbers of workers trained for many special tasks made shoes and other needed things. Friendly Indians, rewarded by gifts, brought in loads of venison and game to their "younger brother Philip" as they termed Colonel Schuyler.<sup>7</sup> In this fashion were the Schuylers able to entertain so lavishly. Little money passed from hand to hand and a sort of barter was the vogue. Accumulations of flour, lumber and salted provisions were packed and sent to the West Indies, this family getting in return sugar, chocolate, coffee and wine, not to mention the sea foods coming from their many friends in New York City. With the garden stuff from the Flatts and the islands adjacent, together with the importations and presents from friends, their wants were well supplied. There was a solemnity to their annual feast held when most relatives could attend, broken at last by that serious invader, which then came to rich and poor alike—the smallpox.

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<sup>5</sup> *Men and Manners in America*, H. E. Scudder, 1887, p. 146.

<sup>6</sup> *Memoirs of an American Lady*, by Mrs. Anne Grant, 1755-1838.

<sup>7</sup> *Men and Manners in America*, Scudder, 1887, p. 157.

These close-up views of early Dutch life may serve as reminders of those early Waterfordians whose Dutch names may still be read on crumbling stones in forgotten resting places.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

In closing this chapter upon local Dutch life, it may be said that the Dutch brought us careful land laws, religious toleration, the written ballot, separation of church and state, the village community of freemen, and a great love of liberty. In regard to the basis of correct living they treated the Indians as human beings, possessing all the rights of manhood.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### WATERFORD, ITS BEGINNING

WATERFORD commenced over 300 years ago under the name Halfmoon, taking that name without doubt from Hudson's vessel the *Halfmoon*, whose small boat in 1609 while engaged in taking soundings, was probably stopped by the "riffs"<sup>1</sup> at North Waterford.<sup>2</sup>

Thus Waterford, the oldest incorporated village in New York State (1794) reaches back to the First Dutch Period at Fort Orange (Albany), and to the aboriginal Mahican Indians who called this whole area "Nach-te-nac."

The first settlers were Holland Dutch from Manor Rensselaerwyck and our first local history<sup>3</sup> states that "as early as 1633, white people crossed the Mohawk and built on the Indian's land at Halfmoon, the latter a matter of tradition, rather than record."

Again, supporting the antiquity of our village and town, we have the statement of Historian Sylvester<sup>4</sup> that "in 1623 or 1630, it is probable there was never a time when at least a few traders and adventurers were not to be found at Halfmoon Point." The old directories also agree that the first settlements in Saratoga County commenced near Waterford. Sylvester also says that Halfmoon and Saratoga were the two earliest names applied to civil divisions, above the mouth of the Mohawk.

### OUR SEALS

The ancient seal of the Village of Waterford traced, for 110 years and perhaps much older, is the ship *Halfmoon*, under full sail. Comparing it with the one now in use, we find that a humorous change has been made. On the new one, a crescent having a man's

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1 The "riffs" are composed of a long stretch of shallow water broken by rocks.

2 Saratoga County, *The Saratogian*, 1899 (p. 31).

3 Waterford 1794-1912 by Waterford Study Club.

4 History Saratoga County 1878.

face in the moon, peers downward o'er the top mast—smoking his pipe. Probably the first seal imprinter was lost in the big fire of 1841. Perhaps the crescent moon was added to the last seal to imply that the vessel really is the ship *Halfmoon*. The pipe? The urge of some wag.

The seal of the Town of Waterford is an Indian in full regalia, in use since 1816.

### HALFMOON CHANGED TO WATERFORD

"The Halfmoon," as the British continued to call our place, was garrisoned in 1691 by their troops at Halfmoon Fort, the latter built as one of the outer defenses of Albany. The Fort's strategic location controlled the Hudson's traffic at a river curve. It doubtless also guarded the nearby ferry, operated it is said, by Harmon Leversie in 1685. It was then known as the Halfmoon Ferry and later as the Lansing Ferry. The Ferry continued until 1805, advertising terms of ferrage as nine pence for a wagon. The ferry was located one mile north of Broad St., Waterford. It crossed the Hudson River and connected our early Halfmoon with the outskirts of a place of varying names, Stone Arabia, New City, Lansingburg and finally North Troy, these titles being borne since colonial days. The ferry crossed the river on an angle and landed on the low ground northeast of the high Pleasantdale cliff.

A few hundred yards away near the roadside, the old Lansing home stood, with its well-house, chain and bucket unfenced, inviting thirsty travelers to drink. On the Halfmoon or Waterford side of the river, the old roadway to the Ferry or Ford could still be seen in 1953, a few yards south of the Miller estate. Sad to relate, however, in 1955 the dog yard of a new bungalow impedes the old road.

Despite the strategic location of Halfmoon Fort, which was identical with that of Ticonderoga, the British did not like it. They planned to move it to the "Battery" near Front street. and even made a drawing of its successor. The latter 1690 idea of the British must have been to control both the Mohawk ford and the Hudson River with one or more cannon batteries. However while drawing

copies of the new fort are filed at Albany, the move was not accomplished.

The Revolution came. The continental military necessity of a straight run up the Hudson River from Albany demanded crossing the several islands in the Mohawk delta, despite the fording involved. Such a plan was adopted and, except during the periods of high water, it became the actual northern route.

This condition led to the construction of a deadly trap near Halfmoon Point for Burgoyne's Army as it advanced toward Albany in 1777.

A long line of cannon fortifications and entrenchments were built by Schuyler's army across the whole northern end of Haver (Peebles) island.

These fortifications commanded 350 yards of open farm land and the Mohawk ford over which the enemy must advance. To cross here would be a desperate move. While these defenses were not used, the continued use of the ford by military forces during the Revolution, wiped out the settlement name of Halfmoon Point and replaced it with the name of Water-Ford, the present name of our village and town.

#### THE EARLY TRADERS AND TRAPPERS

The first white people who built their cabins on the Indian's land at Halfmoon, in the 1600's, were also the first settlers of what came to be the Saratoga County of 1772.

The land was fertile, the waters full of fish and the woods abounded with game. But the most lucrative business of the people was the trade with the Indians in furs and skins, which enterprise finally resulted in a war between the Mahicans and Mohawks. For the first thirty years of the Dutch occupancy this fur trade lasted. Then about 1664, English fur traders came from Connecticut to buy furs and also buy the land at the Halfmoon. Some also thought they came to drive out the Dutch as they had done at a Dutch settlement near Hartford, Connecticut, in 1633. Knowing this, Philip Pietersen Schuyler and Goosen Gerretsen (Van Schaick) petitioned the Council of New Netherland to allow them to buy a certain place offered them by the "Mahikander" Indians, this area being



called Halfmoon by the Dutch. They stated that it would be best for the country and would keep the English "away from this river." Continuing, they said that the land was at the third or fourth sprout of the Mohawk, some three or four (Dutch) leagues north of Beverwick (Albany).

To account for the knowledge that five of Hudson's crew really reached what the author believes to be the shallows or "riffs" at North Waterford, we cite the Dutch historian Meteren writing in 1611. He says the *Halfmoon*, the large vessel, went as high as 42 degrees and 40 minutes, and they went still higher, said he, with the "ship's boat." The Dudley Laboratory at Albany has a latitude of 42° 39' 50", which may be assumed to check, with Meteren.

Hudson, next wishing to know whether he could sail still farther northward, sent his mate and four men to take soundings<sup>5</sup> on September 20, 1609.

They returned late at night on September 22 after an absence of two days, and reported that the channel was very narrow (at two leagues above the ship) and, having also taken "soundings" at eight leagues from the *Halfmoon's* anchorage, said the water was quite shallow and not deep enough for the draught of the *Halfmoon*. Since the European "league" is 2.4 miles it seems without any doubt that eight leagues would bring him at least 19 miles above the *Halfmoon* moored at Albany. This distance would also bring the *Halfmoon's* small boat even beyond the present Barge Canal dam at North Waterford, which this author believes was really the stopping place of the five man crew. The "riffs," once known as such to all Waterfordians, were by necessity the stopping point for all boats. Perhaps it was fortunate that Henry Hudson arrived in September for that is one of the months of the minimum water flow for our Hudson River.<sup>6</sup> Had his visit occurred in April for example, the water depth would have increased since that is the month of maximum flow and frequently as much as 90 per cent greater than that of September or October. Such a variation in

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<sup>5</sup> *History of Albany*, J. S. Weise, 1884, pps. 12 and 13.

<sup>6</sup> Geological Survey Sept. 30, 1952. Sept. 1st flow, 1.84 million gals.; April 6th flow, 61.86 million gals.



water flow would have been certain to have confused the *Half-moon* captain's log book, for had he visited here on a good April day, he could have sailed clear to present Waterford. As early as 1799 New York sloops were doing that even before Waterford and Lansingburg joined to dredge the Hudson. A Lansingburg<sup>7</sup> sloop of 70 ton "burthen," the *Eliza*, was offered for sale in 1799, while the Hudson's *Halfmoon* was an eighty tonner.

Having thus presented Waterford's formidable claim to being the "farthest north" to Hudson's crew, we return to the New Netherland Council which lost no time in acting on the Schuyler-Van Schaick petition of May 27, 1664. It gave, on July 10, 1664, a favorable reply, but added that if the land they desired was later found to be in the colony of Rensselaerwyck, the Petitioners must acknowledge Rensselaer as their patroon. Upon this consent, thus gained from the Council, the petitioner obtained an Indian deed for the "Halfmoon" land. But other things were moving fast also, for in the next few months the Duke of York invaded and subjected New Netherland to English rule.

However, the English respected the title obtained by the Dutch and granted them a patent for the same under date of October 13, 1665.

In 1674 Schuyler deeded his interests to VanSchaick. In 1676, when the latter died, the grant came into possession of VanSchaick's second wife, Annetie Lievers, who disposed of two Waterford tracts to Roelof Garretse (Vanderwerken) under date of February 4, 1686/7. These tracts of land, contained 1124 acres, sold for 126 good beaver skins. This land hereinafter called a single tract, started a little north of the present Cohoes Company's Dam in the center of the Mohawk River. It ran north-easterly for over a mile until it contained the then somewhat boggy land west of the 1955 Waldo Conerty home on the Washington Ave. extension. It coursed down this extension and went down Ballston Street, to the Hudson River following a small stream bearing in the 1890's the odoriferous name of "Stink" creek. The tract went southward down the center of the Hudson River and embraced the low ground on Haver or Peebles

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<sup>7</sup> *Lansingburg Gazette*, Feb. 5, 1799.

Island, taking in also a small island known as Roelofs and then going to the center of the fourth or north branch of the Mohawk it continued to the place of the beginning. This was a smart real estate purchase. It comprised all the village of Waterford, all of the Northside, half the Cohoes Falls, ten Mohawk islands and much arable land, for \$403.20 or 36 cents an acre.

No doubt by this time the widowed heiress Annetie Lievers VanSchaick wanted to be finally rid of the property. She had sold it (or part of it) to VanNoorstrant in 1677 and it "bounced" back. But now the Vanderwerkens managed to hold this considerable expanse of land. Hieroglyphics and maps tell the story of the past and a copy of this 1124 acre plot is shown in this book, being defaced however by the addition of modern things like canals. In possession of the oldest living Vanderwerken in the 1950's were found two such maps, one showing the entire "VanSchaick Patent." A copy of the latter is now the official record of the County of Saratoga. It is not the oldest however, for another valuable sheet placed on cloth (thus truly a mappa) was filed by Waterfordians Ethel Weaver and Historian Hammersley, at Albany. A copy of this aged and restored record (showing the names of many of the old land owners) is also included with this book.

The occupants of the land met the tribulations of all newcomers. They witnessed the wars waged among the Indians, actually the result of the white migration. They feared for their own lives and safety and later asked the British for protection. The Halfmoon fort was the answer. Then strength came with numbers and the Halfmoon settlement began on the "Great Road." Later the populace moved a bit southward to Halfmoon Point and our Waterford history began to assemble itself into a tangible but scattered record of which this book is but a part, collected with slow and almost painful effort.

## CHAPTER SIX

### WHEN WATERFORD WAS HALFMOON

FEW WATERFORDIANS have a clear understanding of the four places which all bore the name Halfmoon during the 1600-1700's. We shall attempt to clear up this seeming confusion, explaining Halfmoon Precinct, Halfmoon Point, Halfmoon (on the Hudson), and 1956 Halfmoon Village.

#### HALFMOON PRECINCT (LOCATION)

Halfmoon Precinct was originally the whole VanSchaick Patent, sometimes called the Halfmoon Patent. It started on the Hudson at Halfmoon Point, now First and Front Streets, Waterford, at the "Battery." It extended northward along the Hudson River to the Anthony Kill creek in Mechanicville. Here it went westward along that creek to a tributary (the Dwas Kill) about one-half mile away. From this last point a straight line ran to the Mohawk River (generally southward), the line being noted on maps as N. 6-30-E, in 1762. Following the curving Mohawk it went back to the place of beginning, Halfmoon Point.

#### HALFMOON POINT (LOCATION)

Halfmoon Point was the zone of the 1784 Waterford village site. It went northward on the Hudson, from the "Battery" to Ballston Street. It went west to Fourth and then southward along Fourth Street to the fourth "sprout" of the Mohawk, and thence to the place of beginning.

#### HALFMOON (ON THE HUDSON, LOCATION)

This started on the Hudson River one mile from Broad Street, Waterford, at old McCoy's. This was near the Henry Miller Estate, where the Halfmoon Fort was located in the 1680's. It extended up the road, called the "Kings" highway in Mrs. Grant's Memoirs, but



more commonly known among early Waterfordians as the "Great Road,"<sup>1</sup> now U. S. No. 4.<sup>2</sup> It went almost to Mechanicville, or rather to the old TenBroeck-Leland House site, 6-7/10 miles from Broad Street, Waterford.

It then went westward to the hills, its western border (the old Champlain Canal) being largely swampy since glacial days. It went southward along these bogs  $5\frac{3}{4}$  miles and eastward, to the place of beginning, i.e., McCoy's.

### HALFMOON VILLAGE (LOCATION)

This Village is  $3\frac{3}{10}$  miles northwest of St. Mary's Church, Waterford. It is the only one of the preceding places that now can claim the name of Halfmoon.

### THE OLD RECORDS OF HALFMOON PRECINCT

Any local history, no matter when done, could have been much better written some fifty years sooner. This time space must, in the case of Waterford, be raised to a full one hundred years. It was in 1841 that a devastating fire destroyed our village's valuable records. Only by mere chance did a single historical item escape. The story goes that an old resident walking about after that fire, aimed a kick at burned debris and uncovered a partly burned book. This proved to be the record book of old Masonic Orange Lodge No. 43, organized in 1795 and the predecessor of Clinton Lodge. While three sides of the book are fire-charred, the contents are legible and finely written. The record tells the story of the death of President George Washington and instructs brother Masons to wear crepe for his passing. From the same source (Clinton Lodge) were other papers which provide the only extant record of the local Masons who were Revolutionary soldiers. The half-burned record book was given to Surrogate Cornelius A. Waldron who in turn gave it to Clinton Lodge.

The records of Halfmoon Precinct (the latter organized in 1772), fared much better. These too, are finely written record books beginning in 1786 before the towns of Waterford and Halfmoon were

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<sup>1</sup> The earliest Military Road from Albany to the north. From *Capital Region of N. Y. State*. (Kimball.)

<sup>2</sup> Esso Map, 1954.



separated. The rag paper on which these are recorded is far superior to the stuff we use today. It stands handling without falling apart. The scribes of those days seemed to know too, that they were writing for posterity. Never appears a carelessly written word, and altogether, it is a monument to the recording angels of that time. So it comes about that we share now with our Halfmoon neighbors the books which tell of the laws, rules and edicts that bound us both together in the years beginning in 1786.

In the days of 1690 and earlier, the Halfmoon was a large and scattered area. From the Halfmoon records, however, no living person can say, except from what old cemeteries suggest, who lived in Halfmoon or in what is now called Waterford, since the zone was one large precinct. It is well then that we now share these written accounts.

This union of Halfmoon people was first governed directly by Albany as shown by Vol. No. 4 of the *Annals of Albany*. The orders were simple and direct as evidenced by the following quotation, "This day, ye 14 October 1700, appointed by Charter of ye City of Albany, for ye Assessors and Constables for ensuing year are as follows,—In ye Halve-Maan, Mees Hogelboom, Assessor,—Cornelis Claese, Constable." The orders were terse and quickly covered the main essentials, finance and the law. The Albany meetings, concerning Halfmoon seemed to be on a yearly basis, for exactly one year later in 1701, we find women suffrage in its first bloom. Ruth Melgertse was named High Constable and Jan Van Ness Assessor, for the Halfmoon Precinct.

Some time later, with date unknown, the "town meeting" system of government became the mode. The town meetings were held regularly and the voting power was exercised by the "respectable" freeholders as they modestly called themselves, and the inhabitants. The reason for the dissolution of the Halfmoon-Waterford system of dual government on April 17, 1816 is instantly apparent from a glance at the record. The meeting places were staggered from home to home and these places were miles and miles of muddy roads apart. Such situation was sure to wear out the patience of the travelers.

The title of "Freeholder" dates back to the 1600's in England. Such were persons, responsible in character and frequently the recip-

ients of land grants. They possessed almost as much authority as the nobles in Europe.

These attributes were certainly well diluted by the characteristics of settlement living in the Precinct of Halfmoon

#### 1720 FREEHOLDERS OF HALFMOON

Jacobus Van Schoonhoven	Winant Vandenberg
Evert Van Ness	Roolifse Gerritse
Daniell Fort	Hendrich Roolifse
Corn'l. Vanburen	Jno. De Voe
Isaac Ouderkerk	Daniell VanOlinda
Lavinus Harminse	Elbert Ouderkerk
Tunis Harminse	Corn'l Vandenberg

(Annals of Albany Vol. 4 p. 267)

A knowledge of the geographical location where some of these people lived suggests that the voting power was almost equally divided between the people living in Waterford and those in scattered Halfmoon. The population for the entire Halfmoon precinct in 1714 was seventy-two and "eight slaves." Albany fixed the land assessment in the "Halve Maen" as 672 English pounds. If one-third of the population were taxpayers, the tax would be \$136.00 apiece.

#### DECLINE OF DUTCH POPULATION

The names of the 1720 Halfmoon Freeholders show the almost complete domination of the Dutch inhabitants. In the same area, 70 years later, the Dutch preponderance had been reduced by English, Irish and Scotch people to 20 per cent of the original Dutch figure.

#### HALFMOON'S LUMBER

Early maps called the area northwest towards Halfmoon, the "Pine Plains." Albany records cite that as early as 1682, hemlock logs were cut in Halfmoon for the people in Albany. Mrs. Anne Grant who grew up at the Philip Schuyler place on the "Flatts" tells of great lumber rafts coming down the Hudson in the spring and foundering on the islands there, due to a sudden fall in the water. An old resident of Halfmoon told this writer that from his

ancestor's farm were cut great, long, pines for the old 1804 Union Bridge. The records of this ancient structure relate that "great, red pine timbers, 65 feet long and sized 14x15 inches were inched into place, by block, tackle & sweat."

Prior to the Revolution, certain timber was "reserved for the King's use," the laws asserting that "all white and other pine trees must be preserved for Our Royal Navy—and not cut without special license." The largest of such prime timber was floated down the Mohawk River. To avoid damage to these naval shipmasts, they were bound around at the thick end with several smaller trees to avoid splitting as they passed the high Cohoes Falls.

### ROADS, TAVERNS, HOGS AND FENCES

The town minute books of the "Freeholders and Inhabitants," are weighty with annual road repairs. These proved to be of great aid to the author, in showing how and where the people traveled in the 1780's. Colonial, No. 1<sup>3</sup> Road will interest Waterfordians. It ran from Halfmoon Point to the "bridge by Hugh Peebles." (The latter is now the Behm home at Brookwood,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles from Broad St., Waterford). Colonial No. 4 went from "Scott's Ferry" to the Cohoes Bridge of 1795. Scott's Ferry was at the east end of Broad Street, Waterford, that street once being called "Ferry" St. before the Union Bridge was erected. Colonial No. 6 ran from Loudon's Ferry (near the old Ike Bedell Farm) through the east end of Halfmoon village, then northeasterly across the country to connect with the "Great Road" at Peebles. (Behm's Brookwood in 1955.) This was the road the author believes General George Washington used in getting to the Peebles home and the Saratoga battlefield in 1783. Near Brookwood also was the old Overocker's Ferry established in 1688. This took eastern travelers across the Hudson River at the termination of Colonial No. 6, from Loudon's Ferry.

Taverns and Stages were plentiful in the days of 1788. In traveling customs our young nation followed the customs of the old country. But here our roads were rough and muddy and only a few miles a day could be accomplished. Often the passengers had to push the

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3 Colonial Roads as such, were so named by this writer only.



vehicle from the mire, and frequently in the summer, the dust was suffocating. It is said that at about the end of every mile a tavern or inn could be found.

In 1788 the District of Halfmoon licensed 39 Inns or Taverns to sell liquor and in 1793 the number had risen to 47 with licenses costing an average of about ten dollars. The officials then said that the taverns were an absolute necessity. They certainly were welcomed by the weary travelers.

Hogs, Swine, Rams and occasional stallions roaming unherded over the country side caused great consternation and annoyance to the people of 1788 and many were the laws passed to combat the nuisance. A family name prominent enough to appear on an early colonial map as the "Widow" Peebles appears in one of these quarantines, as follows—"that from the Widow Peebles, down to Waterford, and from the Hudson River west to the first hill no person shall suffer any hogs or swine to run at large on pain of forfeiture to said Town of Waterford, the sum of four shillings." The menace still crept nearer to Waterford, and in 1792 an identical law was passed covering roaming animals in Waterford town itself. The last stand in this losing animal battle appears in April 1793, as follows—"Resolved, by Freeholders & Inhabitants of the Town of Halfmoon, that there be erected a proper Stocks and Pound in Waterford and one other Stocks and Pound at the expense of the Town." Thus by sheer persistency these animals had fallen to the low estate of man and had to be confined to durance vile—in the stocks.

#### POUND MASTER, FENCE VIEWERS, AND PATH MASTERS

Regularly too, the town fathers appointed such officials as those noted above. The *Pound Master* was one of the last mentioned appointees. His or their duty as to "make use of any place in their premises to confine any wandering horse, cow, sheep, or swine delivered to them, agreeable to the law."

*The Fence Viewers* job was to settle disputes concerning fences and to insure that proper fences were in place and were "four feet and four inches high."

As many as 37 *Path Masters* a year were appointed for the great



task of caring for the roads. In 1796 their title was changed to become the Overseers of Highways.

Quite suddenly and still without any traceable historical reason, a town meeting was held on April 1, 1817, just a year after the long union with Waterford was dissolved, and a vote taken to adopt the name of the Town of Orange in lieu of Halfmoon. Equally mysterious is the restoration on April 4, 1820, of the old name of Halfmoon. The last is a matter of satisfaction to this writer, as it connects this area with the history of 1609.

The War of 1812 in Halfmoon was followed by hard times and the cost of caring for the poor was increased over four times. A site for a poorhouse was selected but this was later suspended, the town joining in with Saratoga's plan, for a "House of Industry."

The farmers were given a bit of supervision on April 12, 1823, when a fine of \$5.00 was imposed for not cutting Canadian thistles between the 8th and 25th of July. This was canceled in 1829.

More growing pains were felt on April 22, 1830 when the office of the *Pound Keepers* was abolished, and again on April 3, 1838 when the first Sealer of Weights and Measures was appointed. On April 4, 1843, Anthony Fitzgerald was appointed Inspector of Elections.

Then in 1846, came prohibition. The Saratoga & Rensselaer Railroad had opened on October 6, 1835 and by 1846 the stages, inns and taverns had begun to fade out.

On May 20, 1846 the people voted on no license, the last faction winning, 186 to 138. This made a real fuss; either a recount was made or a new election held, this time with three Justices in attendance. A reversal resulted.

On July 5, 1854, the first Halfmoon Town Board of Health was inaugurated. It was composed of the three Justices of the Peace and the Supervisor. This was of enough importance to be printed in the *Crescent-Eagle* from July 5, to November 14, 1854.

The Precinct of Halfmoon was finally resolved into the present Township of Halfmoon including Halfmoon Village, with a population of 2836. It is a place of good homes, farms and gardens. At the crossroads to the north, once in Halfmoon, is the very old Clifton Park Hotel.

The Town in 1956, is well cared for by Supervisor Ellis M. Faulkner, Jr. and Town Clerk, Ellis D. Smith. Its finest legacy is the name of Halfmoon.

### HALFMOON POINT (HISTORY)

Halfmoon Point, of early days, is now Waterford and the south-east extremity of Saratoga County. It was the strategic place that lured the immigrant traders from the east. They pictured here the site of a great city, because it lay at the confluence of the Mohawk and Hudson rivers.

They saw here too, the head of navigation of the Hudson, when as time proved, Halfmoon Point was just four miles too far north, Troy becoming the place of the great expectation. So this spot now Waterford, selected with so much promise, still remains the oldest incorporated village in the state, and rich with the history of the past. This was the Mahican Indians' land and at the "Battery" they camped, within the memory of old Waterfordians now departed. Here, at the Battery, the King's Highway or Great Road to the north connected with the ford across the Mohawk, near the foot of Second Street.

Up Second Street this road went, past the Eagle hotel of the Revolution and thence to the Mechanicville road, running beside the old Halfmoon Fort of 1689.

The road was the main war trail which connected New England with Canada and so extensive was its use during the Colonial and Revolutionary wars, that writers settled upon it a new name, the "War Path of the Nations."

Our place too, was important enough to receive consideration from the famous French General Montcalm—The Abercromby victor, as he planned war on our section. He dignified both our early settlement, and our still earlier Halfmoon Fort by naming them the "Af-Moon" on his map of 1757.

It is not certain whether the actual first settlement happened at Halfmoon Point or took place at the Halfmoon on the Hudson, beginning one mile farther north. The latter appears first in Albany records, doubtless on account of the Halfmoon Fort, being located there. But one thing is sure. Waterford received its permanent name

from the Mohawk ford which connected Peebles Island with Halfmoon Point. Some unknown person has pictured for us how Halfmoon Point or Waterford looked ten years before the village was incorporated in 1794. This pictorial map found in the garret of a 150-year-old house shows six buildings. Two were log cabins, two were wooden houses and the other two were taverns. One of the taverns was the Eagle, the haven of the so-called rebels, and the other the Lion, frequented by the then hated Tories. Between these two places, a respectable distance apart, ran the Great Road. Running almost exactly parallel with this road, at Third Street or a bit west of it, was a long swamp, running north and south. Extending east along what is now Broad Street is shown a long log fence.

This picture map supports our first history (Waterford 1794-1912), particularly about the swamp. That book states that at the site of the Town Hall the ground was filled in twelve feet. A geological study by this author shows that this swamp or post glacial run off actually extended northward for several miles. It was finally sealed off from Waterford Village by the high railroad embankment of the Albany & Vermont Co. The Prospect Hill elevation, against which the old Champlain canal snuggled, was the source of the water. The writer believes that this elevation or ridge, going north for miles and miles, was the inner shore line of the ancient and pre-glacial Hudson River.

Time passed by. This Halfmoon Point, ceasing at Ballston street, became the village site bought by the founders of Waterford in 1784. Vigorous Waterfordians, keen for sloop trade, built a 244 foot pier out into the joining Hudson-Mohawk rivers. This was necessary since, with no Troy dam, the water was low and most of the shipping must be done in the springtime. John Stewart also had a dam across the fourth "sprout" of the Mohawk to Peebles Island, for his flour mill. In sailing several sloops to New York City, our men came home with ideas. They nicknamed Front street the "Battery" after that of the big city. The name remains to this day.

Then came the years 1823-1825 and the building of the Troy dam. This of course raised the water level, entirely wiping out old "Water" street which was east of and parallel with First Street. It must have been on sloping land to have so easily disappeared.



The lost street was 45 feet wide. An old map names it and shows building lot spaces from 107 to 80 feet wide east of Water Street and the Hudson River. Thus east of the staunch old Humphrey-Barker home a space of 125 feet existed. Erosion work of the Hudson, totaling over 170 years must of course be considered in this loss of shore space. Gone too, is River Street, once at the north end of First Street above Division.

The Surveyor's center was a stone on Broad Street. It extended 13 feet northward into Broad (from the south side of the 65 foot street) and was 10 feet from the west side of Second St. This was the original monument dividing two tracts of land owned by the Messrs. Vanderwerken and Colonel Jacobus Van Schoonhoven. The latter two persons also divided Costers Island, each receiving four acres. This island was actually Dial City, it being so named later from an either actual or mythical sun dial on one of its streets.

Coster had married Geertje, a daughter of Goosen Van Schaick, the latter an original owner. The Island perhaps was Geertje's dowry.

The east side channel of Coster's island became the "side cut" of the first Champlain canal. Its water encirclement was later maintained by a canal coming from Cohoes and a creek (near the Eddy Valve Co.) which drained the valley now occupied by the Barge Canal. On this creek the writer believes our first sawmill existed.

Waterford's first map shows Coster's as a regular island. Before leaving the subject of Halfmoon Point, we quote Ananias Platt, who started stage coaching in this area. He stated that Halfmoon (on the Hudson) was one mile from Halfmoon Point. This is in agreement with present auto distances between Broad St. and where Halfmoon on the Hudson began.

#### HALFMOON ON THE HUDSON (HISTORY OF)

Advancing up the "Great Road" (Second St.) we leave Halfmoon Point and soon come to the end of the 1783-84 village site at Ballston Street. Farther to the west of Ballston Street and near the future Champlain canal path, was a bountiful spring where nestled Vanderwerken's log cabin when we had but six buildings and an Indian encampment in the village. North of Ballston Street at the



head of Third, the land narrowed sharply, for here and for miles to the north was swampland, a reminder of glacial days. The swamp ran southerly through the village under the present town hall and drained into the Mohawk. The advent of the Albany & Vermont Railroad was a blessing in disguise. The building up of the high railroad embankment at the head of Fourth Street, sealed off the water which was afterward caused to enter the Hudson river by a culvert and creek at "Kerwin's swamp." We continue up the "Great Road" and come to "McCoys" and the site of the old Halfmoon Fort, one mile from Waterford's Broad Street. At this point began Halfmoon on the Hudson, our earliest farming community. In 1952 a historical plate was erected here, near the H. C. Miller home, commemorating both the Fort and the Halfmoon settlement. Elkanah Watson an early celebrity, visited this part of Halfmoon in 1788 and said we had twenty homes. An actual count from an early pictorial map, giving names, shows twenty-two log cabins and farm houses at "Halfmoon on the Hudson." We do not count the Dutch church or the vanished Halfmoon Fort. The latter Fort brings out a striking fact of Colonial days. It reminds of the indifferent attitude the British took toward this colony that it had taken from the Dutch. The regular British government seemed to have no policy whatever. What action if any was suggested by the "Board of Trade" composed of a group then called the "Lords of London." This board prepared the agenda to come before the English Queen as late as 1709. It even considered our Halfmoon Fort. Briefly, it represented England at a time when its commercial interests took precedence over its colonization. The French, striving here for an empire, sharply changed that British policy.

From the earliest obtainable Goosen Phillip Schuyler map, evidently made in 1762-1767, and considered most valuable, we find old familiar names scattered along this 1700 war trail.

Here our first Halfmoon settlers built their log cabins and laid out their farms. To discover who arrived foremost is quite easy. The first pioneers always selected the side of a creek. To trace the early homes we start at the Halfmoon Fort and end near the Mechanicville line with Lot No. 23, the Bailey tavern site of early days. The Schuyler map excites admiration for those early surveyors and map

makers of 188 years ago. Checked by auto for distance, and by old cemeteries for positive locations, perfect agreement was found. The road curves too have remained unchanged over all these years.

### HALFMOON FORT

This defense outpost of Albany was on Harman Leversie's land surrounded by a palisade, one mile from Broad St. Its date was about 1689 or even earlier. It grew out of Canada's DeTracy's war upon the Mohawk Iroquois and was a factor in England's war against France which lasted seventy years. We know nothing about the fort's armament except from the writing of the English. On July 21, 1691, Governor Sloughter writes about this bit of Leversie land saying "I have garrisoned Schenectady and the Halve Moon with some of the hundred fusileers raised for the defense of Albany."<sup>4</sup> As raids from Canada became imminent it was reported that "the inhabitants of Halfmoon requested greater protection; they ask for a regular and a strong fort, against the French."

Next, Lord Cornbury sends a letter to the London Board of Trade, saying, "There was formerly a stockade made in Colonel Fletcher's time, to be defended by a Lieutenant and thirty men, at Halfmoon."<sup>5</sup>

Finally in the Annals of Albany, we get in 1704, the last mention of the fort as follows, "Halfmoon Fort is to be posted with twenty men under command of Captain Higby of her Majesty's service on the frontier."

A study shows that the sites of Halfmoon Fort and that of Fort Ticonderoga are strikingly similar. Both are located at bends in nearby watercourses and both have high ground opposite. Halfmoon had Pleasantdale's high cliff across the Hudson; Ticonderoga had Mount Independence across the narrow lake.

Since our local Major Peter Schuyler is said to have built the first fortifications at Ticonderoga in 1691, we believe that his experience there ultimately led to the selection of a similar location here for Halfmoon Fort.

Since we have just mentioned Mount Independence, it is almost

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<sup>4</sup> *Colonial Manuscripts, New York State.*

<sup>5</sup> *Documentary Colonial History, 1693-1706.*

an editorial offense not to tell about Colonel Jeduthan Baldwin who actually worked himself ill fortifying that mount against Burgoyne's attack in 1777.

Awakening one morning, on that spot so familiar to "Malthaner" Waterfordians, he found his army locker had been forced open and his every possession stolen. The Colonel's morale was down and he was so utterly disgusted that he grabbed his pen and wrote General Gates, asking to be relieved from "this Retreating, Ragged, Starved, Lousey, Thievish, Pocket Army, in this unhealthy Country."<sup>6</sup>

Directly in the rear of Halfmoon Fort was Halfmoon Ferry (later Lansing's) but first operated by Harman Leversie. Here on January 4, 1776 Ethan Allen's cannon expedition on the way to Boston, tried to cross the Hudson's ice. In spite of General Knox's orders an attempt was made and an 18-pounder fell through the ice, but was recovered, says John Becker an eye witness. Today the ancient road to the ferry can still be seen. It is south of the Miller home and very close to a 1953 bungalow, and now covered by a dog yard.

The Old Fort was followed by a rude structure or tavern in the 1780's. This tavern with its large fireplace, became the meeting place for neighbors, and cozy beside the fire, they rested, their troubles forgotten. The tavern was then owned by Anthony Leversie and it is said that friendly Indians also made this a stopping place, as they journeyed to Albany.

Just across the road from the Fort lived Van Olinda in a log cabin, near the 1953 Bumstead home. The name of Van Olinda has been time honored since Albany days of 1662. Hilletie and Lea were Christian Mohawk Indian women of beauty and Christian piety, who acted as interpreters. Peter Danielse Van Olinda married Hilletie.<sup>7</sup> The Mohawks then gave the sisters the "Great Island" at Niskayuna and all the land north of Manor Ave., Cohoes.<sup>8</sup> This line was the northwest extremity of Van Rensselaer's Colony and extended to John Clute's land, adjacent to the bend in the Mohawk river.

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6 *Ticonderoga Museum Bulletin*, Jan. 1938.

7 *Forts and Firesides*, John J. Vrooman, 1943, pp. 41-81.

8 *The History of Cohoes*, A. H. Masten, 1876, p. 18.



## THE PIONEERS OF HALFMOON ON THE HUDSON

Up this old highway, bearing the changing names of the "King's Highway," the "Great Road" and finally the "War Path of the Nations," the pioneer families of the Halfmoon on the Hudson settled. They were located in the following order from where the settlement started at the Halfmoon Fort, one mile from Waterford. They were the Van Olindas, Clutes, Van Alstines, Van Schoonhovens, Bryan, Leversie, Flynn, Fitzgerald, Ten Broeck, Van Vechten, Van Ness, Taylor, Waldron, Comstock, Vandenberg, Peebles, German and Bailey, names still honorably borne by some descendants in the Hudson Valley. The children are the glory of the fathers.

Dutch names, it will be seen were still prominent, but the infiltration of New Englanders, the Scotch, Irish, English and German, could then be noted.

Each settler had on either side of the road, his own large section of farm land. We may guess who arrived first, for they settled by the creeks which were favorite spots among the settlers. We find the Clutes and Van Schoonhovens were beside the Muder Kill (nr. 1953 Silicone Plant, 2 3/10 miles),\* the Peebles at Brookwood 3 3/4 miles),\* John Flynn, near Flynn's creek 4 3/4 miles\* and the Fitzgeralds 5½ miles at the next creek above. The Ten Broecks (later Lelands) were also beside a stream.

These were pioneer people and the common danger of Indians, wolves and such, which they faced together, gave rise to a respect for each other. Yet, their pioneering was not entirely against the Indians or the French, but rather against the forces of nature.

Among them were men who fought in the colonial wars while others had commanded or had fought in the Revolution. Here too, was Flynn's Tavern (5 1/10)\* where captives from Ethan Allen's bold raid on Ticonderoga were fed while traveling southward. At another tavern farther south, (2 8/10)\* both soldiers and partisans were refreshed by Alexander Byan, a dual personage, both scout and tavern keeper, who gave important aid to the Continental army just before the battle of Saratoga.

To aid those still interested in our past in finding these ancient

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\* Indicates miles from Broad Street, Waterford.

places we give mileage positions, from Broad Street, Waterford, concerning the new settlers, who by chance or otherwise, have niched a place in the historical records.

On the west side of the road and situated close to the old Devitt farm (nr. Grand Union in '55) at a scant  $1\frac{6}{10}$  miles.\* once stood the local Reformed Dutch Church of 1799. Old timers think it may have served before the Revolution. Close by, in English fashion was the churchyard, or cemetery, together with the home of the pastor the Rev. John Close, who served the church until Feb. 17, 1802.

At two miles from Broad, now the G. E. Silicone plant of 1955, was the farm and home of Willian Waldron a Revolutionary soldier living on the east side of the road. He was the ancestor of early Waterford Waldrons, and Mrs. John Sherer.

On the west side, at the General Electric site, was the colonial home of Colonel Van Schoonhoven, an illustrious Halfmoon resident whose record is given elsewhere. Colonel Van Schoonhoven is buried with other Dutch settlers in a small fenced cemetery preserved by the General Electric, east of the road and plant. Alongside the Muder Kill creek at  $2\frac{3}{10}$  miles\* and now beneath the G. E. plant, was a prehistoric (Algonquin) Indian camp site, known as the Coastal type.

Its age is estimated as well over a thousand years and the writer and especially Charles Pollock of Waterford have found many Indian curios at this spot. Charles also found here two silver "pieces of eight." At the old Pratt Hotel place site at  $2\frac{8}{10}$  miles\* was the site of the old Revolutionary Tavern of Scout Bryan, the forgotten 1777 patriot who gave General Gates such valuable assistance. At  $3\frac{1}{10}$  miles\* is the Red, White and Blue House. Owned by Benj. Slade, a fervent supporter of the Civil War, it was so painted to express his zeal for the Union cause. A late discovery indicates that it was built from the staunch timbers of the abandoned 1851 Albany & Vermont R.R. bridge which crossed the Hudson River near that spot.

Few places deserve mention more than the old Peebles home, situated  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles\* up the Road at Brookwood, now Behms.

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\* Indicates mileage given from Broad Street, Waterford.

Thomas Peebles was one of the first twelve settlers in Halfmoon or Waterford and this family's notable record is given elsewhere. Here too was the Overocker 1688 Ferry carrying eastern bound travelers across the Hudson, from the Mohawk's Loudon's Ferry.

John Flynn was a colonial soldier and kept a Revolutionary tavern and also owned much land. Part of the Flynn-Fitzgerald cemetery is located at 4 7/10 miles,\* while the Flynn Tavern site was at 5 1/10 miles.\*

Colonel Fitzgerald's home, and the old Waterford camp meeting and picnic ground of the 1850-1890's, was at 5½ miles.\* The colonel is said to have been on General Washington's staff at the battle of Princeton.

The Ten Broeck farm, known for many years as Leland's and still producing newspaper historical items in 1953, was the site of a raid and massacre by French and Indians in 1748. It is 6 7/10 miles\* from Broad St., Waterford.

Lastly, to the north and a little south of Mechanicville, was the early tavern site of Henry Bailey.

### COLONEL JACOBUS VAN SCHOONHOVEN

The prominence of no other pioneer Halfmoon settler exceeds that of this Commanding Colonel, 12th Regiment of General Ten Broeck's Brigade of Militia.

His ancestry dates back to Geurt Handrikse, birth date unknown, but who lived at "Halve Maan" in 1675. The Colonel was born in 1744 and was numbered among the founders of Waterford. He also was the first Supervisor of the joint Halfmoon Precinct. He held many other offices, being Justice of the Peace, Village Trustee, First Judge of Common Pleas (1791), State Senator (1794), and Member of Assembly (1786-1791). His colonial home was at the present site of the General Electric's Silicone plant. He rests with other Dutch settlers in a small cemetery, east of the plant. His military career is mentioned among the Revolutionary notes.

### ALEXANDER BRYAN'S TAVERN

This old tavern was on the west side of the road, 2 8/10 miles

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\* Indicates miles from Broad Street, Waterford.



from Waterford. It was located on the site of what became "Pratts" hotel in 1863. Bryan was a refugee from Longfellow's Arcadia, and this famous scout of Revolutionary days narrowly escaped capture as he brought to General Gates the news of Burgoyne's approach. He was a confidant and friend of the American officers and was called the "unpaid patriot." His tavern was the resort of soldiers and partisans from both sides, toward whom he conducted himself so discreetly that he was molested by neither but confided in by all. His place was once described as "a one and one half story building, painted red, and window sashes having diamond paned glass; the bare floors scoured white and with polished pewter on the dresser." More about Bryan is told under Waterford's part in the Revolution.

### THE PEBBLES SITE

Close to the 1953 George Behm home at Brookwood, near the creek side, rest the remains of the Peebles, a noted colonial family. This site is  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles from Waterford. The family was one of wealth and distinction. It is said they came to this country in their own ship. Thomas Peebles was the first of the original (12) Halfmoon families and was of Scotch ancestry.<sup>9</sup> He selected the homesite in 1766 and bore the name and had the character of an honorable and upright man. Thomas Peebles was a pre-Revolutionary Justice of the Peace and died in 1774. His son Hugh was a secretary to "Lord Sterling" an American Major General during the Revolution. The Peebles family connections mingled with every local Dutch family of prominence since 1665. It was at the Peebles' home, old newspapers state, that General George Washington and his party consisting of Governor Clinton, Alexander Hamilton and others were entertained in the year 1783. Considering the statement on the historical marker near the Albany capitol, this writer believes the group crossed the Mohawk River at either Fort's or the Loudon Ferry about a mile south of the old Hawley farm in the present Halfmoon Village or hamlet. From the latter place a colonial road (No. 6) went directly to the Peebles home.

Time passed and in 1823 Maria and descendant Gerritt Peebles bought most of Haver (Oat) Island. The last Peebles was Anthony

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<sup>9</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, April 9, 1886.

A., of Lansingburg, whom the author remembers well. Anthony A.'s wife's grandmother was a descendant of Governor William Bradford of the Plymouth Colony. She, (Anthony's wife) was an author and a lady of letters. The writer of this book was a Peebles Island messenger for these Lansingburg Peebles as the couple grew old. Anthony's wife it happens, selected my first books as a course in literature. For a boy of nine or ten years of age, it seems now that her choice of the *Wandering Jew*, the *Eternal City* and the *Outlook* magazine, was perhaps a bit "heavy," but they were good foundation stones.

Regarding the neglected cemeteries of the Flynn-Fitzgeralds and the Peebles, this author hopefully feels that some civic group will eventually reclaim and preserve both these Pre-Revolutionary places.

#### THE FLYNNs AND FITZGERALDS

Five and one-tenth miles from Waterford was the site of the 1753 tavern of John Flynn.<sup>10</sup> He was a colonial soldier in the wars preceding the Revolution. Old military records connected with the capture of Ticonderoga by Ethan Allen show that John Flynn fed the British captives at his tavern on May 13, 1775 as they traveled under military escort to the south through Halfmoon.

The Fitzgeralds had military rank, and like the Peebles, settled beside a creek on the same road in about the 1740's. Colonel Fitzgerald's grove was a picnic and camp meeting ground for the Waterford churches from the 1850's until the 1890's.<sup>11</sup> In those unhurried days simple pleasures satisfied the people. Crowded on a rough sand barge, drawn by slow mules, and impeded by three locks, those contented folk traveled on the old Champlain Canal to this quiet place. At the locks some kindly soul would toss aboard a bushel of harvest apples to the unforgotten delight of the children.<sup>12</sup> Kind deeds live on!

We feel sure that Mrs. Anne Grant, born in 1755 had the true key to contentment when she said "being easily pleased is one of the great secrets of happiness."<sup>13</sup> It seems that that kind of life has

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<sup>10</sup> Forbear of Attorney Stephen Keating.

<sup>11</sup> *Diary*, Laura Cramer Ormsby.

<sup>12</sup> One of the children was the author.

<sup>13</sup> *Memoirs of an American Lady*, Grant.

departed for most of us. In a little creek-side cemetery, crowded by trees some  $4\frac{7}{10}$  miles from Waterford, part of the related Flynn and Fitzgerald clan sleep side by side. Colonel Fitzgerald was a son in law of John Flynn and fought in the Revolution with General Washington.

#### THE TEN BROECK-LELAND HOUSE SITE.

Six and seven-tenths ( $6\frac{7}{10}$ ) miles from Waterford is the 1737 site of the old Ten Broeck home, also on a creek side. In the 1780's this so-called "Mansion" was owned by a Scotchman, John Strachan. All these pioneer families on the "great" road much valued a water supply and all who could, settled beside a creek. On this farm, later known as Leland's, occurred a massacre in 1748 by raiding Canadians and Indians. The house now standing on the site, while not the original, is very old. The interior timbers are hand-hewn.

#### HALFMOON AS A RIVER PORT

Most of our story of the Halfmoons has concerned land activity. To complete the history of Halfmoon on the Hudson, we should mention a zone of shoal water located at from 2 to  $2\frac{8}{10}$  miles from Waterford, near the site of the 1955 locks of the Barge Canal.

To all the older Waterford residents this was known as the "Riffs." They were a trial and a major impediment to every colonial and continental military commander who used the Hudson river as a cargo carrier. The riffs were the northern stopping and landing places for the many hundred batteaus sailing from Albany. Here their cargoes must be removed from the boats and shifted into wagons, drawn by oxen and horses for the long portage to Stillwater. The place is noted in both the military experiences of Colonel John Bradstreet of Abercrombie's Army and in the court-martial evidence of General Phillip Schuyler.

Few places in America have witnessed more stirring times than these places made memorable by our Halfmoon of Colonial and Revolutionary days.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### WATERFORD ON THE WAR PATH

THE STORY of the several Halfmoons has carried us beyond the Revolution, an account of the latter appearing on later pages. To observe some chronological order, we revert briefly to one of our several colonial wars confirming Waterford's eminent place on the "War Path of the Nations," a title which involved the Hudson and Champlain valleys.

The battle line of supplies for King William's, Queen Anne's, King George's wars and the marchers of the French and Indian wars all went through Halfmoon or Waterford and our place became the portal, too, for the small armies or expeditions of General Winthrop and Major Peter Schuyler. These later expeditions against the French received almost no help from England. The Iroquois Indians also, conscious of England's "no help" policy, cooled off toward that nation.

Then followed the expeditions of Nicholson, Sir William Johnson, Winslow, Abercrombie and Amherst. Our place in colonial history became firmly fixed because of the natural impediments which these marching forces faced as they waded across the Mohawk delta. Their supplies were also halted by the "riffs" or shoals of the Hudson some 2 to 2 8/10 miles above our village. Similar shoals in the Hudson also worried military commanders at Stillwater, Schuylerville and Fort Miller.

We have selected the campaign of Major-General and later Sir William Johnson,<sup>1</sup> to show the gruelling aspect of local war in the year 1755. Johnson was the "Great Brother" of the Indians, and was largely responsible for making North America an English speaking continent. Johnson, however, while an able and patient man, was no military commander. His Crown Point expedition in

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<sup>1</sup> *Johnson Papers*, William Johnson, 1738 to 1808.

1755 is a classic example of how a war should not be fought, while the Lake George battle which resulted, was won by subordinates.

But all the faults could not be attributed to Johnson. There was no unity among the colonists in the fight. No paymasters went along with the army. The fighters struck 1955 fashion, while in the woods; they wanted monthly pay. The wagoners too, went on strike. They threw the cannon balls away—and ate the provisions.

To encourage enlistments for this army and make the service more agreeable, the officers were picked from the ranks. Each soldier acted as though he were at home, with each one wanting the right to be directed by his own sentiments.

The General said the men were "homesick." Several distinctive things occurred at the Lake George battle. General William Johnson was shot in the thigh, a burden until his death—while his opponent, Baron Dieskau, received four terrible bullet wounds and finally died from them. Here the brave Colonel Williams and the Mohawk Chief Hendrich were both killed. Both were notable men and each has moulded his name in history. Williams College grew from the Colonel's will, while Chief Hendrich was known because he and three other chiefs traveled to England and called upon Queen Anne in 1710.

This 1710 overseas visit was very unusual for American Indians. It was part of a plan sparked by the top men of Albany to impress the Indian tribes, through their several Indian "Kings," with the power of England's might. In the case of Hendrich it was successful. He gave his life for England. He was a Mahican, adopted by the Mohawks. One unexpected event developed during his foreign travels. As the Indians were being shown the notable things of England, Hendrich noted with compassion the war ridden and displaced Palatines huddled beside the river Thames.<sup>2</sup> Told that they had no homes, Hendrich offered and gave them his Schoharie tract of land—which the American whites later made sure the Palatines did not get. And we call the Indians savages!

Feeling indebted to England for his success in America, William Johnson returned his appreciation. While building Fort William

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<sup>2</sup> *The Hoosac Valley*, G. G. Niles, 1912, p. 95.

Henry he changed the name of Father Jugués Lake St. Sacrament to Lake George (after a British king) and also the name of Fort Lyman to Fort Edward, son of a British king. The fort had first been named for the cool-headed General Lyman whose leadership won the battle of Lake George.

However, at that battle, all was not amiss among the colonial soldiers. A force of 200 New Hampshire militia from Fort Lyman met some fleeing French soldiers at Bloody Pond. They killed so many that when the bodies were rolled into the pond a bridge was formed over which the victors passed. The army discipline was bad near Lake George, but the sharp shooting was excellent.

### THE RIFFS AT HALFMOON

These river obstructions were the same which this writer believes brought to a stop Henry Hudson's small boat in 1609 and continued to halt all river navigation for over three centuries. Back in 1757 two alert British Colonels, Bradstreet and Pearson, proposed to "remove the riffs, above Halfmoon, so that battoes might pass over." They declared that the cost of Army transportation might thereby be reduced from \$6.96 to \$1.68 per barrel. General Johnson was still on that campaign at Lake George. He desperately needed more of the cannon balls that his unruly wagoners had once tossed away, and more too, of the provisions they had pilfered. Twice on Sept. 22, 1755 he issued orders, "that shot and shell from Halfmoon be brought hither."

Sometime later, however, he had to settle for bread instead. Only two days supply was available for his army. The provisions in barrels were brought to Halfmoon from Albany by twenty to thirty battoes. After being pulled ashore at Halfmoon, ox teams and wagons hauled the foodstuff to the deeper Hudson water above Stillwater. Between Schuylerville and Fort Edward the roads were very bad, some impassable and Johnson tells of scores of horses dying while pulling the loads through the mire. In 1756 the Province of New York was charging the British \$6.96 for each barrel of food carried from Albany to Lake George, twice as much said Lord Loudon, as the food was worth.

Part of the immense and ill-fated 15,000 man army of Aber-



crombie also passed through Halfmoon, clashing with the same river obstacles as did Johnson. Abercrombie's army camped in Waterford. Several of his soldiers were buried here, skeletons, buckles and buttons later being found. Johnson was a writer and left us nine full volumes, unfortunately not indexed. In these he said, "The Mohawk branches will be impassable, from expected heavy rains." He asked for scows for "passing wagons and horses over the sprouts."

It remained for General Philip Schuyler to give us the best evidence concerning the "Riffs" on the Hudson, while he was trying to feed the Ticonderoga garrison in 1776. He was before a court-martial for the loss of Fort Ticonderoga in 1777. Scanning the account of this trial, we find a letter to his Quartermaster-General in which Schuyler warns, "The duties of your office are the most difficult of any in the Army. Supplies go from Albany to Halfmoon, in battoes, from whence it is conveyed to Stillwater by carriages.

"Thence it again embarks in battoes and transported to Saratoga Falls, (Schuylerville). Thence by land across a small portage; thence by water to Fort Miller Falls, thence across a small carrying place by land; then again by water to Fort Edward."

For this army service Schuyler ordered one hundred and fifty battoes, fifty each to be built at Halfmoon, Albany and Schenectady.

The battoes (bateaux) were the common river carriers of the 1700's. These were pine river boats copied from the Iroquois war canoes. They were from 20 to 25 feet long and were pointed at both ends. Each could carry about 3000 pounds of powder, pork or flour, etc. and a crew of from four to seven men. The battoes could either be rowed or pushed along by long poles. The latter was a favorite method in shallow water.

David Holden of Groton, Massachusetts, tells in his 1760 diary of "setting sail at Albany and coming to Halfmoon, with 79 battoes." This reveals just how the battoes were most usefully employed. Fifty or more would travel constantly back and forth between Albany and Halfmoon, the latter place being the landing point for the barrels and cargoes.

Then some thirty or more oxen or horses with wagons would carry the burdens to Stillwater. Stationed at Stillwater, and at the

terminals of each of the long water spaces also, would be a number of battoes, all traveling back and forth.

It was said that only 36 miles of navigable water then existed between Fort Edward and Albany. This made it necessary to handle a single barrel of provisions eleven times between Albany and Ticonderoga, the two places cited in General Schuyler's court-martial evidence. This meant six different water voyages and five trips by wagon. The general ordered "turning cranes" erected at Halfmoon, at Stillwater, at McLarens (Old Saratoga) and at Fort Edward, to keep the men from bumping the bottoms out of both battoes and wagons. Schuyler said that "these cranes are of trifling expense and preserve the battoes." Some 20 years earlier General Wm. Johnson used these devices for the same job, calling them "gins or triangles."

Also helping Colonel Bradstreet move cargoes by batteaus on the Hudson (North) River and the Mohawk too, was Waterford's Captain David Gregg, an officer in the French and Indian war. History records his task as also carrying batteau cargoes around the Cohoes Falls before the Mohawk journeys could be resumed. Captain David Gregg was the ancestor of the present Gregg family, which moved to Waterford from Windham, New Hampshire in 1822.<sup>3</sup>

Britain's colonial war policy embraced the idea that the colonists should assume the cost of their defense both in men and money. England would make gifts of ordnance and other necessities. So it came about that in six different early wars our untrained provincial troops tried to protect our own frontiers. The capture of Louisberg in 1745 marked the only war in which they were successful. Another costly mistake of the British was the assumption that the Indians could be used as a sort of frontier guard. After the Five Nations Confederacy had lost half its warriors in attacks upon "New France," the Indians saw through the British policy and never again went over whole-heartedly to the English.

The country was a wilderness in the 1700's, for these were the days of the forests primeval. Peter Kalm, returning to New York City in 1750 after a trip to the interior, remarked to one of the

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<sup>3</sup> *History of Windham*, N. H., L. A. Morrison, 1719-1883, pp. 547-548.

city folk, whom he called "Christian People," "I wonder Sir, that they don't grow sick, ten times a day, in such a place."

But our pioneers were gradually getting used to the wildness of the land, and they found the hunting good.

William Johnson, writing to the Governor's wife in 1751 says "I shall bring three fine wood ducks and some wild turkeys; I shall take them myself—can't trust the shippers." Perhaps Johnson craved both the hospitable warmth of Albany and roast turkey too, cooked white fashion.

Perhaps the prices of two hundred years ago may interest some of my readers. Johnson's Papers show these war prices of 1755 as he prepared for his Crown Point-Lake George expedition.

#### WAR PRICES OF 1755

Bread	\$ .03 $\frac{3}{4}$	per pound	Blankets	ea.	\$2.50
Beef (bbl.)	10.00		Coat	ea.	7.50 (imported)
Pork (bbl.)	15.00		Trousers	ea.	2.37 (imported)
Bacon	.13	per pound	Shirt	ea.	1.87
Cheese	.10	per pound	Shoes	pr.	1.87
Butter	.18	per pound	Stockings	pr.	1.00
Wheat	1.70	Bu. (in 1751)	Axe		1.20 (1751)
Rum	.55	per gallon	Spade		1.75 (1751)



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### ETHAN ALLEN SPEEDS THE REVOLUTION

ETHAN ALLEN'S bold exploit at Ticonderoga on May 10, 1775 gave new impetus to this civil war, the first of many conflicts for which the future United States was unprepared. Our colonies had their border disputes and were fairly cantankerous with each other. But they had managed almost entirely, to resist every show of royal authority from the mother country. New York's resentful and unhappy patroon farm tenants felt too that a successful revolution might improve their status.

The "taxation without representation" slogan was gaining ground and the yearning for "liberty" was alive in the land. Allen's war spoil of 120 cannon from fortress Ticonderoga was an important stroke, and his allied blow at Crown Point helped too. Our pride in taking Ticonderoga was pardonable, but the determination to hold it that first winter of 1775-76 was a calamity. It brought our soldiers an agony far exceeding that of Valley Forge. The British had a solid policy when they held Fort "Ti." They did not pretend to contest the terrific northern or almost Arctic winters, which, our officers testified, "made six inches of ice, in two nights." Instead, they moved most of their soldiers from "Ti" to warm winter quarters in Canada, leaving but a token force at the Fort. It was this small force that Allen and Arnold had surprised. Pages have been written about that terrible Ticonderoga winter of 1776, where the climate was far colder than at Valley Forge. At Ticonderoga our men cut up tents to make more bedding, and dozens of these poorly clad men froze to death as they slept. No shoes or blankets were obtainable, and the temperature dropped to zero nightly. There was no medicine for hosts of sick men, and our General Schuyler sent wine from his Albany home for the freezing and sick soldiers.

This was the price of our liberty—easily forgotten in 1956. While the garrison at Ticonderoga was starving and freezing, most of its



THE KNOX ARTILLERY TRAIN, TICONDEROGA TO BOSTON, 1775

COPY FROM  
TICONDEROGA  
MUSEUM





armament of cannon was being hauled to Boston. One of these heavy weapons, in a Hudson River incident at Halfmoon or Lansing's ferry, firmly joined the name of Halfmoon to the cavalcade of Knox's cannon in 1776.

### CANNON FOR WASHINGTON

Ethan Allen's cannon were sorely needed by General Washington as he looked down from Dorchester Heights at Lord Howe's fleet and military forces, snug in and about Boston Harbor. Determined to drive them from that haven, Washington remembered all those cannon stored at Ticonderoga. He directed the plump Bostonian, then Colonel Knox, to move this artillery to Boston, allotting him the sum of \$1000.00 for that purpose. Knox, a careful planner, performed a wonderful job in moving that great mass of metal over our wilderness country. Fifty-nine cannon, some weighing 5000 pounds each had to be transported over land, across hundreds of streams, river or gulleys without a single bridge in the entire distance. Knox found a way. In December of 1775 he moved the cannon down the water of Lake George by gondolas. Then almost praying for snow, he built 42 heavy sleds and hired eighty-one yoke of oxen. A handful of Continental troops were among the determined men who helped the oxen and horses push these great burdens up the snow-covered slopes. They finally reached Stillwater. There a disagreement took place with Squire Palmer over the price of hiring oxen. John P. Becker,<sup>1</sup> an eye-witness, recounts how General Philip Schuyler then sent for his wagon master who succeeded in rounding up nearly 124 pair of horses to replace the oxen. The march was resumed and all went well until they reached what was called the "usual place of crossing," the Hudson River at Halfmoon—then Lansing's Ferry, (now the Miller Estate,) which is one mile from Broad Street in Waterford. Now enters an episode which confuses local historians and authors alike. It was due to an entry in General Knox's Diary, written at Albany on January 5, 1776, in which he says "now a cruel thaw hinders from crossing the Hudson River, which we are obliged to (cross) four times from Lake George to

<sup>1</sup> *The Sexagenary* (John P. Becker) and *Story of old Saratoga*, Brandow, 1901, pp. 182-202.

this town." As a matter of fact, Knox himself did actually cross the Hudson River four times. He went ahead in a light sleigh on a sort of a trial run. But the cavalcade of cannon only crossed the Hudson twice, once near Northumberland (going west,) and again at Albany, going east. Knox in his trial trip first crossed at Northumberland. At Lansing's he crossed again (second) to New City, (Lansingburg,) traveled south and re-crossed (third) the Hudson (westward) to Schuyler "Flatts." His final (and fourth) trip over the Hudson was with the cannon at Albany, enroute to Boston.

The cannon cavalcade, now at Lansing's Ferry in Waterford, prepared to cross here by flooding the ice to thicken it. Next, they wanted to know the worst all at once and selected one of their heaviest cannon, an 18-pounder which weighed at least 2000 pounds. They then tried a crossing. A rope of 40 feet connected the cannon sleigh and the horses, with an axeman nearby to cut the rope should the ice fail. In the Hudson's middle the ice gave way with a crackle and the noble 18-pounder sank to the bottom. They marked the spot and sent for Colonel Knox at Albany who was both vexed and badly upset by this accident.

The cannon was recovered, however, and the train of artillery, now changing its course, passed through Waterford on Jan. 4, 1776. The people of the country were mightily pleased with the weapons that Ethan Allen had pilfered from the British. Very few had ever seen a cannon and they regaled the drivers with cider and whiskey for the privilege of hearing a big mortar actually fired. These cannon were the first that Congress could call its own. Some bore impressive titles or lettering such as "Ultima ratio Regum" (The Final resort, or Reckoning of Kings). Another of these, a 13-inch Mortar, was to have both a dramatic and a ludicrous career. It had first attended an invasion of Canada, then returned to Ticonderoga, to be captured by Allen. It came through Halfmoon and went to Boston under Knox escort. After there peering at Lord Howe, it came back through Halfmoon and went again to arm Ticonderoga, never once having been fired in all this time. Then, suddenly conscious of its British ancestry, it blew to pieces in resentment as the Continentals aimed it at Burgoyne when he approached Ticonderoga in the year 1777. Still another Ethan Allen cannon, a British 6-





THE HALFMOON OR LANSING FERRY FROM LANSINGBURG SHORE





pounder, seemingly fell through the Mohawk ice while crossing Loudon's Ferry,<sup>2</sup> just above Cohoes.

It lay on the bottom of the Mohawk's rocky gorge until 1831, and was found when the first or second Cohoes Dam was built. It was the noisy toy of a Cohoes political party. When a new political regime took over, the old cannon instantly became to them a sort of anathema and they tossed it back into the Mohawk, from whence it came. It was recovered a second time and spent many years at the old Schoharie Fort. In 1927 it found its way back to this area and became an attraction at the Van Schaick Mansion in Cohoes.

World War II came and the Ticonderoga Museum, knowing the history of this Ethan Allen cannon, phoned this writer to save it from the menace of a local scrap drive, then in progress.

Too late! When found in a Watervliet junk yard it lay in a dozen pieces. Undaunted, Ticonderoga's unforgettable Stephen H. P. Pell, when informed of this calamity said, "Save the pieces." We did, and after its 167 years of wandering this 6-pounder went back to "Ti" and is now known as the Halfmoon cannon. It graces Ticonderoga's inner court, so vociferously entered by Allen on May 10, 1775. Its fractures were perfectly restored by Ticonderoga's experts.

But Knox's artillery train must move on. His Continental soldiers and men gave up further attempts to cross the Hudson at Lansing's Ferry, and came down into our village of Halfmoon Point. They then moved westward over West Waterford's "Fonda Military Road" to Loudon's Ferry where the cannon train crossed the Mohawk.

Loudon's Ferry, using one or two small islands in the Mohawk, had been in use since 1755 or 1757. A road connected it with Halfmoon (Point), then a regular concentration rendezvous for colonial armies and expeditions, Loudon's Ferry being used at those times when the Island route (over the Mohawk delta) was impassable due to high Hudson water.

The auto distance from the West Waterford depot, over the "Fonda" military road, to the ferry entrance (near the old Ike Bedell

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<sup>2</sup> *Ticonderoga Museum Bulletin*, 1952, Vol. IX, No. 1, pp. 56-67.

farm) is just two miles, while from Loudon Ferry to the old Lansing Ferry site, the distance is  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

One 1953 writer states that Knox's cannon passed over the Mohawk at Dunsback ferry. This error is doubtless based upon a questionable sentence in Knox's diary that "Sloss's" (sometimes called Claus's) Ferry was about seven miles distant (from Halfmoon). Dunsback ferry happens to be in that area.

General Knox managed to mislead not only that 1953 writer but another also who wrote specifically upon Knox's cavalcade of cannon without traveling over the route.

This confusion arises because General Knox did not travel with the cannon in our zone, nor did he cross the Mohawk ferry either.

He first made an early run over the intended course with a light sleigh crossing eastward over the Hudson river at Lansing's or Halfmoon Ferry to what he called "New City" (Lansingburg).

The Hudson ice, however, was not heavy enough for the heavy cannon at Lansing's ferry and an accident occurred. Then the cavalcade crossed the Mohawk instead at Loudon's ferry on the way to Albany.

Rather than depend upon Knox's diary entirely, we quote from the account of John Becker<sup>3</sup> who with his father drove the horses which pulled a number of the cannon.

The 1767 Map of the Van Schaick Patent furnished with this book is also found useful since it shows a portion of the "Mill Road" leading out of Halfmoon Point over which the cannon partly traveled to get to Loudon's Ferry.

Confirmation of this route is substantiated by the presence of a New York State Historical marker directly across the Mohawk at the Barge Canal dam, one-and one half miles above the Cohoes Falls. The marker designates the spot as being "Loudon's Ferry."

Which Mohawk ferry Knox's force crossed with the cannon, seems solidly clinched for Loudon's Ferry by the finding of an Ethan Allen cannon No. 11-26 some  $7/10$  miles downstream from Loudon's. Ticonderoga Museum, a recognized authority on these 18th century weapons considers it an "Ethan Allen." After considering

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3 *The Sexagenary*, John P. Becker, pp. 30-35, by Munsell, Albany, 1866.



the evidence which now follows, this author confirms Ticonderoga's opinion that states it was without doubt lost by Knox's cavalcade.<sup>4</sup> The Mohawk River area at Loudon's was for a long period noted (and confirmed) by photographs to be a favorite zone for ice jams, before the Barge Canal came.

Here is the rocky bottomed Mohawk gorge and without doubt cannon No. 11-26 was pushed down this natural chute by spring ice accumulations. If lost at Dunsback, (miles away) any river man would hesitate to say that such a 900-pound mass could slither in the mud around the greatest of the Mohawk's curves, to get so far away from Dunsback's. The Mohawk's rock gorge is about one and a half miles long above the falls and Loudon's Ferry was included in it.

Finally, on such an urgent expedition as Knox's where the soldiers and men were obliged to assist the horses by pushing uphill on super ton burdens, it can be safely said that the leaders would never go deliberately past nearby Loudon's with its easy approach, to use Dunsback, miles away.

Loudon's Ferry remained in the news. The Revolutionary army, under Generals Dearborn<sup>5</sup> and Poor for a time, occupied the defenses placed here perhaps by Loudon in 1757. These 1777 generals were ordered here to guard the ferry crossing, in case Burgoyne decided not to give battle to Schuyler who had erected a fortified trap for the invader on Peebles Island.

England was shocked by Sir William Howe being forced from Boston on March 17, 1776, by the "royal" cannon that had been taken by Ethan Allen and Arnold at Ticonderoga. General Knox and his men laboring, under great odds, had made this possible. "Virtue hath its own reward." Washington suggested to Congress that Major General Knox be made our first Chief of Artillery, and from 1785 to 1795 he was also Secretary of War.

As Britain heard of Lord Howe's evacuation of Boston she recalled nearly five million dollars uselessly spent during the Boston occupation and sadly remembered her 1050 fallen soldiers who had

<sup>4</sup> *Lake Champlain and Lake George*, F. F. Van de Water, 1946, p. 343.

<sup>5</sup> Gates' Letter to General Washington, Aug. 22, 1777; *Troy Times*, January 6, 1889.

died at Bunker Hill in June 17, 1775. Early in 1776 our Continentals had 16,000 men around Boston, but being without artillery they could not force the British to leave that port.

It is interesting to read of the British evaluation of Knox's feat. The English historian Belcher wrote, "The cannon were brought from Ticonderoga by vast toil and in the face of great obstacles."

Military mistakes nourish the critics. Britain's Lord Howe failed in 1776 to occupy Dorchester Heights—and lost Boston.

Our Continentals even with this vivid lesson of war on the blackboard, failed to remember it and neglected to place cannon on Sugar Loaf Hill (Mount Defiance) and handed Ticonderoga back to the British in 1777.

Sad to say, this somewhat dimmed the 1775 glory of Ethan Allen, but it balanced the military score of the Revolutionary enemies.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE REVOLUTION COMES TO HALFMOON

HALFMOON slipped quietly into war. The District commemorated it by raising on October 11, 1775, twenty-four British pounds and twenty-five shillings for the Provincial troops holding that Ticonderoga fort whose capture on May 10, had quite scandalized Congress. We fear that Halfmoon's gift was quite too small, for our soldiers were destined to suffer horribly by the cold northern winter of 1775-76. But spring finally came and some of the surviving troops across the Lake from Ticonderoga celebrated the Declaration of Independence by naming their defensive position "Mount Independence."

#### OUR 1776 TROOPS

The military organization was divided into three classes, (a) The LINE, (b) the LEVIES, and (c) the MILITIA. The Line had nine organizations and consisted of the soldiers under the services of General George Washington, the Regiments of Artillery, and the Green Mountain Boys.

The Levies were drafts from militia regiments, and from the populace generally, who could be called to serve outside the State. It had seven groups.

The Militia could only be called outside the State for three months at a time. It had sixty-eight organizations.

Each County was divided into Districts. Each district was commanded by a Colonel, and his zone was given almost unlimited jurisdiction in military matters. Each male from 16 to 50 years was enrolled. Later the latter age was increased to 60 years. When warned, each able-bodied man had to serve or be both fined and imprisoned. Every soldier had to present himself armed, plus a



blanket, powder, horn and flints. Officers were required to serve fifteen years.

### ALBANY COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE

Halfmoon was in Albany country during the Revolution and war operations and allied matters were handled by the "Committee of Correspondence" which was identical with similar groups in New England.

The Revolution was, as British historians called it, a civil war, and the local Loyalists gave the Albany Committee of Correspondence annoying problems. On April 8, 1777 a group of Halfmoon citizens were seized for "Joining in a Confederacy suspicious to the State." After considering the evidence against the group, we delete their names. The non-allegiance trouble which caused their arrest was presented by a rather unprincipled character repeatedly working for fees, in this case a ten-pound note. At a later date the "Suspicious six" suspects voluntarily appeared before the Committee and taking an oath of allegiance to the State, were discharged. We also delete the name of the well known Colonel who having about twenty miles to travel, arrived with his men, too late for the battle of Saratoga. We are glad to add that he was not our Colonel Van Schoonhoven and was not a Waterfordian. Discipline also looked bad among the Halfmoon Militia men. Isaac Fonda was first empowered to arrest Private ——— for treasonable practices and was authorized to call upon the Militia for assistance. In the fullness of time Captain Gerardus Clute of the 12th Halfmoon Regiment put a fine upon the troublesome private and his "goods and effects were seized." (The private had refused to appear under arms about May 10, 1776.) Next, a third private party obtained and gave back the goods to the "treasonable" private. Things then began to boil. Colonel Jacobus Van Schoonhoven was directed from higher levels, to take part of his regiment and to retake the goods from the private. Accompanying the Colonel's orders was the following logical proclamation, "Justly sensible that when the recommendations of the Continental & Provincial Congress are not carried into execution, then our endeavors against the arbitrary measures of the British must fail."

Written also in the "Minutes" of the Albany Committee of Correspondence are the names of its representatives for Halfmoon

Jan. 27, 1775	Corneilus Tymese	June 3, 1777	John Fort
March 21, 1775		June 3, 1777	Herman Fort
and 1777	Isaac Fonda	June 3, 1777	Cornelius Groot
June 3, 1777	Rutger Lansing	June 3, 1777	Adrian Hegeman
June 3, 1777	Gerardus Clute		

### DEPUTIES TO THE PROVINCIAL CONGRESS

The following men decidedly Halfmooners, were appointed on May 10, 1775 to be Deputies from Albany County.

Guert Van Schoonhoven  
Isaac Fonda

Welhelmus Van Antwerp  
Ezekiel Taylor

### THE MILITIA

The militia, many of whom served in the early colonial wars, operated under a plan originated by James, Duke of New York and Albany, in the year 1664. They were called the "Duke's" laws and were declared by some to be both paternal and creditable.

They had four local and one general training day each year and once in each four years had one general training day. One attractive angle was the rather involved land bounty rule which in 1781 was modified to give those who served, 500 acres of land.

### THE HALFMOON AND BALLSTON 12th MILITIA REGIMENT

These combined forces had six companies and were commanded by the following officers:

Captain Gerardus Clute  
Captain Nanning Vischer  
Captain Jeremiah Vincent

Captain Joshua Losee  
Captain Tyrannis Collins  
Captain Stephen White

Colonel Jacobus Van Schoonhoven, of the 12th Regiment of Militia, one of our Village founders, is mentioned among the Albany records as the head of General Ten Broeck's Brigade of militia marching to the northward and doing continuous "scouting in the woods." He was commissioned October 20, 1775. Some of the militiamen of the 12th Regiment were Isaac Fonda, Jacob Hemstreet, Guert Van

Schoonhoven, Jonathan Douglass, William Robinson and William Waldron. The latter settled on the "Great Road" in Halfmoon, close to the present General Electric plant, and was the forbear of the Hon. Cornelius A. Waldron and his daughter, Mrs. John D. Sherer, persons of longevity, whose combined living in Waterford equals one hundred and seventy-six years. Other Revolutionary soldiers were Ezekiel Whitney, John Duffy and Gerardus Van Schoonhoven.

### WORKING HOURS OF THE REVOLUTION

The long hours that men worked proved that a war was on. General Schuyler in a letter to his Colonel on the Hudson River directed that "Carpenters must start work at daylight and work until sunset, an hour for breakfast and one and one-half hours for dinner; no sitting down to smoke and drink. In very hot weather, two hours for dinner."

Soon the Mohawk ford at the foot of Second Street was teeming with foot soldiers and the Hudson's west shore at the riffs (North Waterford) was jammed with bateaux loads of flour, pork and peas which after loading into wagons went to Stillwater and thence north for still another water journey. The army of Montgomery was passing through to attack Canada, and so urgently did Ticonderoga need food also, that General Schuyler urged that 1000 barrels of both pork and flour be sent through the winter by sled, saying that "things must go by sleigh or wait till the latter end of May," for the river to open and the roads to dry up.

All Schuyler's planning and pleadings were in vain. Montgomery was to die in Canada, with disease riddling his failing army, while the Ticonderoga garrison was to starve and freeze in early 1776.

General Burgoyne during this year went overseas to plan for his 1777 Champlain-Hudson invasion. The year 1777 was a fateful year for both Burgoyne and Schuyler. One was to meet bitter defeat, while Schuyler was to be wrongfully deprived of his command.

### WATERFORD'S REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS

American soldiers are, and always have been, citizen soldiers. They fight only when they have to. They grouse, but they fight with



such fervency, that the action itself almost says "Let's get it over with and go home." After War II the writer tried, for New York State, to get historical records from at least a portion of Waterford's estimated 1200 fighting men. Just two papers were returned from the veterans of two very prominent social groups numbering about 200 members. This neglect may be either modesty or a national trait. Waterford's Revolutionary soldiers may have had similar failings, since a list of their names was not obtainable in 1953. We were therefore fortunate to find among the historical records of old Orange Masonic Lodge of 1795, the names of the following Revolutionary officers and soldiers. All may not have been native Waterfordians, but other files definitely show that forty-three men of the Revolutionary army were members of Waterford's Orange Lodge No. 43 whose lodge book remains permanently open at the death page of Brother George Washington.

#### REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS<sup>1</sup>

*Colonel:* Edward Fitzgerald, Aide to General Washington.

*Majors:* Henry Bailey, Stephen Clark.

*Captains:* John Petitt, a Waterford Village Founder; Matthew Gregory, a Waterford Village Founder; Samuel Lockwood, John Johnson, John Clark, Asa Bice.

*Adjutant:* James D. Clark.

*Quartermaster:* Hugh Peebles.

*Chaplains:* Revs. John T. Close and John Chase.

*Lieutenants:* John Watson, a Waterford Village Founder; John Ten Broeck, Thomas Smith, William Warner, Thomas Ostrander, John Moon.

*Ensign:* Nathan Green.

*Surgeon:* Benjamin Shaw.

*Privates:* Gilbert Livingston, Thomas McEntee, John Connell, a Waterford Village Founder; William Robinson, 12th Militia Regiment; John Waldron, William Gilbert, James Buyers, James Freeman, Jeremiah Vincent, Nathan Sherwood, Jacob Vanderwerken, Col. Van Schaick's Regiment; Andrew Willsy, John Reed, John Vincent, Ebenezer Lockwood, Abraham Duell, John Goeway, Nathan Green, John Hanks, John Douglas, James Simons, John Wiltney, Nicholas Young, Ebenezer Keeler, David Chambers, James Freeman, John Taylor, Thomas Scott, Joseph Paul, William Griffith, Joshua Woodworth, Jonathan Douglas, 12th Militia Regiment; John Haight, Thomas Weller, James Grooms, John

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<sup>1</sup> From old Mss. from Orange Lodge No. 43, 1803.

C. Pratt, Schuyler's Army (worked on Peebles Island fortifications); Jacob Clute, Elijah Smith, Richard Morris, Stephen Conklin, John Gilbert, John Pettitt Jr., James Buys, Moses Scott, a Waterford Village Founder.

### THE CHAPLAINS AND SOLDIERS OF 1776

The Chaplains of our World Wars I and II, performed such outstanding service for our soldiers, that knowledge of their predecessors of 1776, may interest some readers.

Before the Revolution, the clergy was the most important class of educated men, while fifty-four members of the signers of the Declaration of Independence had attended college.

Of the Chaplains who served in the Revolution, the Congregationalists furnished the greatest number, the Presbyterians second, and the Episcopalians next. There were a few Baptists, German Protestants, and at least one Catholic chaplain.

An American Revolutionary delegate declared "that in the horrid sins of cursing and swearing, and other vices, the American soldier compared with the worst British troops." But in all things there is an opposite and we refer to the army life of Amos Farnsworths. This Minuteman of Lexington kept a diary.<sup>2</sup> On May 8-9-10 of 1775 he writes "Attended prayers morning and night. There were several guns discharging and killed one or two, others naturally escaping. Blessed be God that my life is preserved," and on Wednesday, May 31, "Felt calm and serious to-day. God enabled me to wait on Him three or four times to-day in secret. Blessed be God for such a season. Three men were buried to-day. We went to fire on Boston, when a cannon split, and wounded eight men and one dead. Oh, the sad effects of war; when will the time come when we need learn war no more?"

We do not doubt that Ensign Farnsworth's prayers were heard and that he was cared for. We read that both he and his wife lived to be very old, the soldier dying at ninety-three and one half years. This man also mentions coming through Albany, Stillwater and doubtless through Halfmoon and Saratoga. Another entry shows that when Revolutionary soldiers were given time off, they

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<sup>2</sup> *Three Military Diaries*, S. A. Green, 1901, pp. 84-94.

could personally arrange for a temporary substitute. The muster rolls show that such military absences could be without loss of pay. Ensign Farnsworth was no coward in spite of his piety. In one battle before some of his entries, he was both shot through the arm and struck in the back in the same attack.

A number of our Revolutionary soldiers grew up under the fallacy of John Locke and his ideas, printed about 1690. These unwise rules caused children's feet to be dipped in cold water, "to harden them." They also wore thin-soled shoes so that "the wet may come in."

How could we fail to win a gruelling war with the British when probably a considerable number of our weaklings had been eliminated by the "Locke" methods of living, dieting and sleeping?

### THE BATTLES OF SARATOGA

Waterford's proximity to one of the "Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World" suggests a brief account of these battles which took place on September 19 and October 7, 1777. On August 19, Major General Schuyler relinquished his command to Gates by orders of Congress. Gates now reinforced, moved forward from Haver & Van Schaick's Islands on September 8, to unfavorable, low trench positions at Stillwater. Upon the suggestion of the valuable Colonel Kosciusko, (honored by a monument at West Point) he again advanced and fortified the high ground at Bemis Heights. Battlefield visitors will note by markers the extreme rearward position of General Gates. Real hostile critics declare that the General could not even smell the Saratoga battle from that safe distance.

On September 19, Burgoyne started a three-pronged attack upon the Americans, each of his generals having a portion of his forty-two cannon. The patriots did not have a single piece of artillery except that to be taken later from the enemy during the first battle, at the Bloody Ravine. The British planned an encircling movement. When their three units were in position to be indicated by a cannon signal, the whole army would go forward at once.

Gates' scouts brought him news of the British advance but he decided to await the attack within his defenses. This greatly alarmed Arnold who pointed out the Napoleonic slogan that the army that



keeps to its trenches is beaten. Finally Arnold's forces and Morgan's riflemen were permitted to advance. It was a furious battle and both sides exhibited desperate valor, our men making that priceless discovery that in war they were equal to the best soldiers from the battlefields of Europe.

At five o'clock in the evening Burgoyne was near defeat and hastily called for his chief of artillery, General Phillips, (who by a smart erection of a single cannon battery had so easily "wangled" us out of Ticonderoga) together with the German General Riedesel. These two with their corps had been posted along the Hudson, awaiting signals to join the battle.

The status of Riedesel's German troops with General Burgoyne had not been too cordial, in spite of the heavy German losses at Bennington. Many of these Hessians were country folk and had been snatched in Germany from churches and meeting places. They had been literally shanghaied into this war.<sup>3</sup> General Riedesel now on the scene, posted Pausch's lively battery on a hillside near Freeman's farm and then he, with Phillip's corps, smashed at the American right. It folded and was forced to retire. Now, very strangely, Burgoyne called a halt and missed victory, much to the anger of his generals. It happened that our powder and ammunition was almost gone and later the still patriotic General Schuyler hastily collected powder and made rifle balls from the lead from the windows and roofs of Albany houses in time for the final battle of October 7. How kind again was the strategy of Providence, for the final victory at Saratoga was hardly of men. God had planned the United States to be a great nation. Some of our Saratoga commanders felt this too. General Dearborn said on Oct. 1, 1777, "If Mr. Burgoyne and his army are not subdued this month, it will not be for want of spirit in us, or for want of the Divine Assistance, which has not failed us heretofore."

#### BATTLE OF OCTOBER 7, 1777

We preface the account of the final battle of October 7, with quotations taken from books obtained in England for this purpose.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Story of Old Saratoga*, Brandow, 1901, p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> *The First American Civil War*, Henry Belcher, 1911.

General Arnold is described as being gifted with amazingly soldierly qualities and among the foremost of great generals. And Colonel Daniel Morgan was "an ideal scoutmaster." "He led a force of marksmen without compare in any part of the world, and with his deadliest shots perched in trees, the (British) officers fell like pheasants; every artilleryman was shot down, every horse killed."

Among the Americans the word was passed that at Saratoga the British were enclosed. There would be "good hunting" at that place.

The British historian discussed the American sharpshooting of the British officers and also mentioned the conspicuous metal British soldiers wore upon their uniforms. He stated this brightened metal was an aid to such killings. These metal decorations, as a consequence, were later removed from British army uniforms.

He depreciated the killing of officers by selection. This was new and considered un-sportsmanlike by the British. He added that Gates' army was composed of farmers and woodsmen—who did not like British bayonets. He also told that when the British 62nd Regiment left Canada it had 500 men, but after the first Saratoga battle only 50 men and five officers were left, and that the 47th Saratoga Regiment had also fought at Lexington and Bunker Hill.

The British historian concluded with an account of the last battle of October 7, "Burgoyne went to right front—met a violent assault from Morgan's deadly riflemen who had eight battalions in support. Burgoyne's left wing was enveloped by overwhelming numbers of the enemy. The German troops fought with courage and persistency. Arnold, though suspended from duty, burst into action by attacking the center; being repulsed there but getting increasing forces, won the key position of the British camp."

The American account agrees that Arnold and Morgan were the leading spirits in hewing out the victory at Saratoga. Arnold had charged Gates with a lack of spirit during the battle of September 19, and the result was a rupture between the two, Arnold being deprived of his command. Gates' army now began to grow. The crops were in and the militia had returned to fight.

Burgoyne's situation was serious. After the first battle he had armed his camp and was awaiting the arrival of Sir Henry Clinton,

under Howe, coming up the Hudson. On the 7th of October his rations were very low and after a war council began a reconnaissance in force with 1500 men and ten cannon, to explore Gates' defenses.

Colonel Morgan after orders, furiously attacked the British right while Poor, Learned and Dearborn with their riflemen, assaulted the left and center causing a momentary British retreat due to the energy of their attack and deadly shooting. General Fraser however, beloved by his soldiers, formed a new line and restored order. Where ever this British officer went, success seemed to follow. This was observed and Col. Morgan gave the order to remove the General. Calling his best marksman, Tim Murphy, poor General Fraser was soon lying mortally wounded, a calamity which depressed the British. Arnold, hearing the noise of battle, and now totally unable to keep out of the fight, dashed from his confinement and mounted his horse. Taking command of Learned's brigade he savagely attacked the British front, but being repulsed, dashed away with his men to the now poorly defended enemy right, the key to the whole British camp.

Its commander Breyman was killed on the spot and the position taken, Arnold himself being shot during its capture.

Just after General Frazer had been shot by Tim Murphy, Albany's General Ten Broeck with his New York Militia appeared on the field of battle.

This was one of the "last straws" for Burgoyne. He found himself overwhelmed and beaten on all sides in a hour of battle. The Continentals because of Arnold's dashing raid, were now in his rear. Burgoyne awaited the darkness of night to leave behind him, the battlefield, his dead, and most of his cannon.

The horrors of war were evident on the fields of Saratoga. The British lost in the two battles about 1700 men, and many officers. Three young ensigns, none over seventeen years of age, were buried in a single grave. Most of the injured were sure to die in the chill October air. No anesthetics then, and nothing for an operation but a drink of rum and a bullet to chew on. To add to the horror, ghouls searched the fields during the darkness and stripped the dead of their clothes. After that neither friend or foe could be distin-



guished. Seven members of the British Parliament were in that battle, with fate unknown.

The American losses, dead and wounded, for the two battles was 469. While we still marvel at the story of Saratoga, one of the world's decisive battlefields, let us not forget the sharpshooting of the colonial riflemen, commanded in part by Colonel Dan Morgan. He was the fast moving officer who with his corps of sharpshooters walked 600 miles from Virginia in 21 days to join Washington at Cambridge after hearing about Lexington.

It may lift our (never neglected) ego a bit to read four British opinions of our Continental and Colonial armies. Said Englishman Harry Dickson, "Minute-men volunteered; they came in a minute and staid about a minute. Each day Washington had a different army from the one of yesterday—and generally smaller." Kinder was David Hartley<sup>5</sup> who said, "They (the Americans) took Louisburg from the French, singlehanded; they dragged the cannon over a morass and carried the shot upon their backs, an everlasting memorial to the troops of New England, and we left them to struggle their way through."

Kate Hotblack, in Chatham's *Colonial Policy*<sup>6</sup> goes straight to the point. "After the peace of 1763, the colonies were exhausted; all they wanted was a little wholesome neglect." The case is closed by English author F. J. Huddleston.<sup>6</sup> "But, instead of being left alone, the Colonies were worried and bullied like naughty children."

#### HALFMOON SCOUT, ALEXANDER BRYAN

Alexander Bryan, our Revolutionary scout, kept a tavern 8 8/10 miles from Waterford. Bryan was a man with great powers of endurance and knew the country well. He was discreet and reticent and gifted with a fine address and presence. He was selected to become General Gates' chief scout when Gates took command of the northern army on September 15, 1777 and was observing Burgoyne's Army when he was hotly pursued by a British detachment as he left Fort Edward. His name is not fixed in history because it was Gates' habit not to mention those who served him best. Bryan

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<sup>5</sup> Hartley, Speech, House of Commons, March 27, 1775.

<sup>6</sup> *Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne*, 1927, pp. 38-41.

died at the age of 92 years, after leaving Halfmoon in 1787 to become Saratoga's first tavern-keeper.

On his monument in Saratoga's "Greenridge" cemetery, are these words. "Alexander Bryan, died April 9, 1825, the first permanent settler, (in Saratoga). An unpaid patriot who, alone and at great peril, gave the first and only information of Burgoyne's advance on Stillwater."<sup>7</sup> He was buried at Carlisle, Schoharie County.

### REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSES ON PEEBLES ISLAND

General Schuyler's Army, under St. Clair, was in wretched condition after it had abandoned Ticonderoga to Burgoyne in July of 1777. It was diminishing daily, the men were restless and many left the army and returned home. Food, clothing, ammunition and artillery were all needed. The country's anger at losing Fort Ticonderoga was hastily aimed at General Schuyler because he was in charge of the Northern Military district. His actual part in the Ticonderoga defeat will be considered later.

History relates that "Schuyler retreated to the mouths of the Mohawk and there fortified them." The Mohawk ford to Haver or Peebles Island (later to be called Waterford) offered an extraordinarily strong defensive position, and Schuyler's engineer, Colonel Kosciusko, made the most of it. Burgoyne's army must here advance over three hundred and fifty yards of open land and water faced by entrenched cannon which commanded the ford.

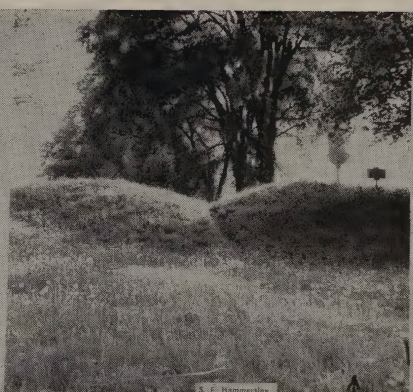
Kosciusko had erected three separate fortifications, with ditches in front and all connected by entrenchments for troops. Two of these forts fronted the ford while the third was on high ground at "Point O'Rocks," directly across from the north end of King's power canal of the 1830's. Should invader Burgoyne elect to avoid this deadly Haver Island trap, and turn west to cross the Mohawk at Loudon's ferry, he would find similar opposition. For here, just less than three miles away, lurked the unfriendly Generals Dearborn and Poor, who were guarding that ford, using the entrenchments of an earlier day.

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<sup>7</sup> *Reminiscences of Saratoga*, W. L. Stone, 1880, p. 67.



S. E. Hammerley



S. E. Hammerley

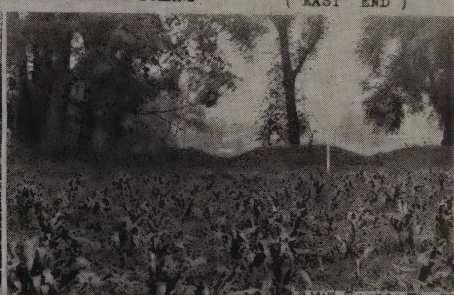
CENTER) FORT

Gen. PHILIP SCHUYLER'S 1777 FORTS ON PEEBLES ISLAND

( EAST END )



W. E. Barker Photo

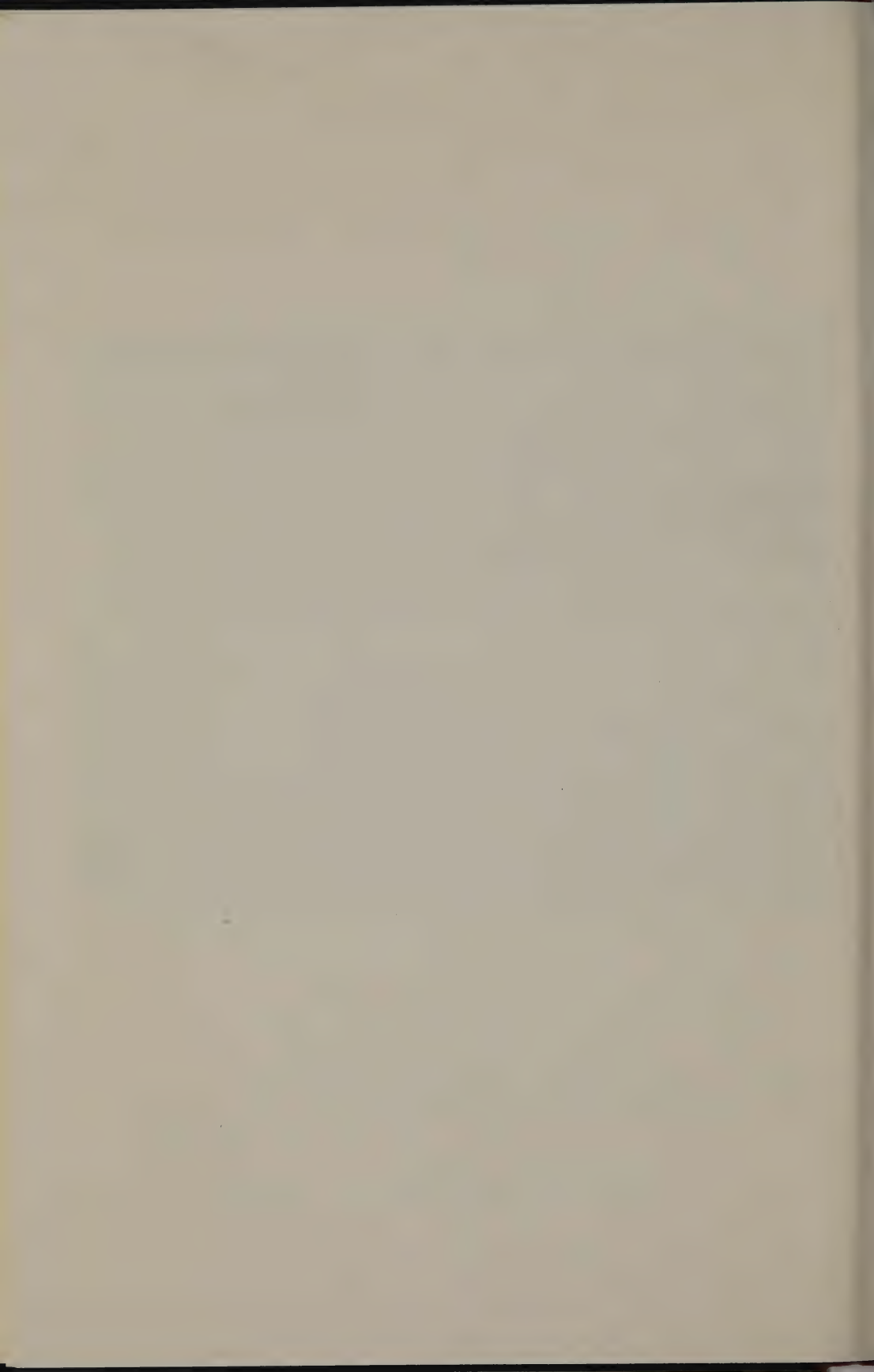


W. E. Barker Photo

SEMI-CIRCULAR FORT AND ENTRENCHMENTS  
(ALSO MAHICAN CASTLE SITE)

FORT TO DEFEND THE WATER-FORD





But Haver Island<sup>8</sup> was not destined to become a battle site. Providence had again chosen the little thing to confound the mighty.

It happened that the inept Lord Germaine (British Secretary of State) and a two-time military bungler had failed to issue timely and very important military orders. These had been previously arranged by Burgoyne and agreed upon by the British War Department. They required Lord Howe's forces to meet Burgoyne at Albany with ships and men. Lord Howe with his fleet sailed the ocean blue while poor Gentleman John Burgoyne's army waited and died on the vine at Saratoga; but not before Burgoyne had wasted numerous spies sent out to hasten Howe to Albany.

The last unfortunate spy, thinking he had arrived at the British military station commanded by British Sir Henry Clinton, was actually in the Rebel Clinton's camp by mistake and, next, spoke too quickly. Tardily finding his mistake he swallowed his message, cased in a silver ball. Our Clinton got the ball, the message—and hung the spy. The ball now can be seen at Ticonderoga Museum.

Before leaving the subject of Haver Island, we should mention the pre-historic Indian Castle Moeneminnes erected, the author believes, directly beneath Schuyler's fort at Point O'Rocks. This was a palisaded Mahican castle and is shown on Van Rensselaer's map of 1630. It was named after Algonkin Chief Moeneminnes who was killed in a needless war with the whites. That the Continental forces should also choose this same cliff defended spot for a fort, is an indirect compliment to the so-called savages. The Indians were seldom inferior to the whites in strategy. Throughout New York State are numerous large cities or towns which were formerly Indian village sites. The writer mentions that the position of castle Moeneminnes was located almost identically with that of the Mohawk Indian castle Otstungo. The latter was located beside a creek near Fort Plain with towering rock cliffs on one side, a ravine on the other, with palisades doubtless on the front. This was said to be the haven of the Mohawk (Iroquois) after their defeat by the Mahicans in 1669. Such locations, with natural defenses made frontal attacks very costly.

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<sup>8</sup> Called "Haver Eylant" by the Dutch; *Troy Times*, Jan. 6, 1889.

## MISFORTUNES OF BURGOYNE AND SCHUYLER

Ironical twists of fate entangled both Burgoyne and Schuyler in 1777. Burgoyne was almost a good general, except that he took advantage of too full a social life, the female contingents, their baggage, dresses and all, accompanying his army. His other mistakes were military.

(1) Sending slow moving and heavily attired troops to raid Bennington.

(2) The handicap of the long 200 mile supply line to Canada, which he either planned or accepted in England as part of his advance on Albany.

His defeat, however, was due to a lack of British army staff co-operation. In his later court-martial this was confirmed by the British Parliament. So, instead of contesting our Waterford defenses, he came through our village as a captive of Col. John Glover on October 18, 1777.

General Philip Schuyler was truly unfortunate. His pre-war activity in the New York boundary disputes, with Massachusetts and the New Hampshire grants, was added by his enemies to the loss of Ticonderoga. He did not give the order to fortify Mount Defiance. Neither did the British Abercrombie and two other American Generals St. Clair or Gates. Gates himself was especially delinquent while Commandant at Ticonderoga. A bright American army officer, Lt. John Trumbull, obtained from Gates, permission to test fire from Fort Ticonderoga a 12-pounder cannon up Sugar Loaf Hill (Mount Defiance), some 856 feet high. The young officer envisioned an attack on Ticonderoga from this peak which they said was too steep to be armed. They said, too, our cannon would not shoot that far. Gates saw Trumbull's experimental shot reach Sugar Loaf but did nothing. If the Americans had fortified it, the downward fire of the cannon could probably have held off Burgoyne's fatal thrust at Fort Ticonderoga.

But war is the business of experts, and the British veteran of artillery General Philips and his Lt. Twiss armed that peak in the incredible time of thirty-six hours, and won Ticonderoga easily. Burgoyne's officers in putting a battery on what the British re-named



Mount Defiance, has been called one of the truly great military maneuvers of New York State history. The peak, known both as Sugar Loaf and Mount Defiance, was the obvious weak spot in one of the most elaborate defense systems of Colonial times. Yet the builders and users of Ticonderoga, Mt. Hope, and Mount Independence, completely overlooked it.

But still, Schuyler was a fine strategist. On the 28th of June, 1777, fifty-one days before the first battle of Saratoga, he wrote from Moses Creek (near Fort Edward) these almost prophetic words to the Committee at Albany—"If General Burgoyne should get as far as Half Moon, he will run himself into the greatest danger; in all probability his whole army will be destroyed." General Schuyler must at that early date have had the fortifications of Peebles Island in mind. Some eighty years later General Winfield Scott visited that Island and declared it to be "the best strategic position for the defense of the lower Hudson."

But the battle of Saratoga was not entirely of men and we quote Creasy<sup>9</sup> who wrote, "Nor can any military event be said to have experienced more important influence on the fortunes of mankind, than the complete defeat of Burgoyne, in 1777."

### WATERFORD AFTER THE REVOLUTION

"Washington Slept Here" has become a bit of levity for the movies. Yet several news items indicate that General Washington came Waterford way twice, and slept at the Peebles site. His account books carry both expense and local travel data for the years 1782 and 1783. On Vroman's map of 1779 (said to have been made for Washington's use) there is denoted the "Widow Peebles" as a stopping place. Washington reported money spent at the "Widow—, near the Ferry." Peebles was at Brookwood (Behm's) three and three-quarter ( $3\frac{3}{4}$ ) miles from Waterford on Route No. 4.

It was  $4\frac{1}{8}$  miles from the Peebles home or tavern to our Waterford on the Mohawk. From the Peebles place to Loudon's Ferry the distance was about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles. It cannot be said how far "near the Ferry" meant, but it may have been Waterford, Loudon's or Fort's

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<sup>9</sup> *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*, Sir Edward Creasy, 1851.

Ferry that Washington meant. We do know that General Washington did cross one time at Fort's Ferry.

The *Waterford Advertiser* of April 9, 1866 printed, "In 1783 the Peeble family entertained General Washington and party, on their way to visit the battlefields of Stillwater." Washington also tells in a letter to Rochambeau—I am setting out for Albany to visit my posts." This was on June 24, 1782. At Albany he was given a salute of 13 sunset guns and then with Clinton, Schuyler and Gansvoort and 40 horsemen, he visited the Saratoga battlefields. He returned by way of Schenectady where he was greeted by 100 Oneida and Tuscaroras Indians in full war paint. The author believes that our great General came through Halfmoon twice. Vroman's special 1779 map shows but one road going this way to the battlefields and that went past the Peebles home, at Halfmoon on the Hudson.

Several venerable men of Revolutionary days were still alive in 1832 according to the *Waterford Union* of July 11, 1832. Deacons Moses Scott and Ezekiel Whitney were feted at the Mansion House by joyful Waterford, "at the Festal Celebration of Independence Day," July 4, 1832. Others remaining in the news were William Waldron, a soldier of 1776 and Dr. German.

The public made a bit of fun of the Doctor. They called him a "relic" of the Revolution. He continued to wear a three-cornered hat and short knee britches long after these were out of fashion. Dr. German lived at Clifton Park and at times shared the practice of Waterford's Dr. Whittmore.

### WATERFORD'S REVOLUTIONARY TAVERNS

Our first history says, "No spot in the village is so sacred to the traditions of the past than the Eagle Tavern, once a famous hostelry." For the benefit of today's people we mention that it was located about 200 feet north of Broad Street on the west side of Second Street or No. 64. One landlord of the tavern was Gerardus Schoonhoven, a son of the Colonel and also a soldier of 1776. It was called the "Eagle," folks said, in contradistinction to the nearby Tory tavern which was called the "Lion." The account continues, "In 1774 Tunis Garribrant kept the Lion which was a resort for all who represented

Tory interests in this community. It had a swinging sign with the Lion and Unicorn fighting for the crown."

The Lion was then located on the northeast corner of Broad and First Streets. In those early days, Broad was called Ferry Street and on a Waterford map, probably one of the first, steps are shown leading down Hudson bank to the ferry.

A final note on the affairs of 1776 states that at the time of the Revolution, that portion of the village now between First and Fourth Streets, was a field, mostly under cultivation, while John Vanderwerken owned and reserved one-half morgen (one acre) of land, centering around Knickerbocker Hall.

#### NOTABLE EVENTS OF 1775, 1776, 1777, TO 1788

The Revolutionary War actually started April 19, 1775 with the battles of Lexington and Concord. Yet travel was so slow that it took eleven days for the news to reach Virginia.

On March 17, 1776, Ethan Allen's Ticonderoga cannon which had passed through Waterford on January 4 of the same year, forced the British to evacuate Boston.

On July 4, 1776 the great UNITED STATES OF AMERICA was born with the adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

The first great fleet fight of the United States Navy took place at Valcour Island on Lake Champlain, October 11, 1776, although the U. S. Navy was formally founded on November 28, 1775.

On July 6, 1777 Fort Ticonderoga was abandoned by the Americans, and June 14, 1777 saw the birth of the Stars and Stripes, Congress adopting a flag having 13 stars and 13 stripes.

The Revolution came to an end by the signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783.

New York State had taken a notable part in this war. Nearly one-third of all the battles took place within our State.

Severe had been the raids of the Tories. As late as 1780 these Tories continued their raids. This meant grave hardships for the farmers of the Saratoga area. To preserve their grain they hauled it to Albany in the winter and then carted it back in the spring.



The Tories eventually paid for these depredations. Some 30,000 immigrated to Canada when their cause was lost.

### ALBANY'S HONORED DEAD

During both the Colonial and Revolutionary wars, Albany was the hospital town. Here were brought the injured who were cared for in 800 beds distributed about the settlement in homes and churches.

Here too are buried General Philip Schuyler, General Peter Gansvoort, Stephen Van Rensselaer, together with the young Lord George Howe, the grandson of George the First of England. His death by a French bullet just before Abercrombie's attack on Ticonderoga took the heart from Abercrombie's now leaderless army. Lord Howe was the actual director of that expedition of 15,000 men and his death contributed heavily to Abercrombie's defeat by Montcalm.

### REVOLUTION BANKRUPTS ENGLISH INVESTORS

English Sterling was the money standard until after the Revolution. Money was scarce, with only two to three million pounds in circulation.

In 1773 it took \$2.00 in New York money to buy a single Spanish dollar, while an English pound was worth \$8.40, almost four times more valuable than the 1953 pound.

The money invested over here came from the English gentility, merchants, lawyers and clergymen. Since four-fifths of the capital in America was provided by goods on credit, the Revolution bankrupted many London merchants. It was also a tragedy for investing British lawyers, clergymen and the rest.

### ALBANY FIGHTS OVER THE CONSTITUTION

New York State on July 26, 1788 ratified the Constitution of the United States, being the eleventh State to adopt it. The vote was 30 for and 27 against.

All was not peace and light in our new United States. August 8, was a day of commemoration at Albany, eleven cannon being fired to start the celebration parade. Ten floats were in the parade, and

among the group were Captain Gansevoort, Maj. General Philip Schuyler and Stephen Van Rensselaer, the latter at the "Gilded Plow" float. A farmers flag was nearby, bearing the motto, "God Speed the Plough."

After the parade the anti-Federalists attacked, one Jonathan Kidney jamming a file into the fuse-hole of a cannon preventing its discharge. Then the Light Horse Company charged the mob, while a stonehouse was being torn apart for missiles. This was but the beginning. Peter Yates and Abraham Lansing, Anti-Federalists, put on a show by burning the Constitution. After another was found, the Federalists started a warlike procession bearing the Constitution aloft. With plenty of stones, bricks and pieces of iron at hand, it soon waxed into a proper fight with the Anti-Federalists finally running away. What a miracle it was that we became a great nation!

On April 30, 1789, General George Washington became the first President of the United States, and on July 14, of the same year the terrible French Revolution began.

#### BRITISH COMMENT (1800)

The British, not too happy, looked at our young nation from the sidelines. One of their visiting travelers, John Maude, took occasion in 1800 to remark:

"Americans brag about their happy riddance from British tyranny and taxation, but Americans now pay."<sup>10</sup>

#### UNDER FORMER BRITISH RULE IN 1800, AMERICANS PAY

Highest tax per annum .....	\$8.00	Tax .....	\$167.00
Beef per pound .....	.03	Beef lb. ....	.06 - .09
Butter per pound .....	.09	Butter lb. ....	.20
Eggs, twenty for .....	.12½	Eggs (Doz.)...	.12½
Wheat (Bu.) .....	.75	Wheat (Bu.)...	1.50

#### BRITISH COMMENT (1955)

In the year 1955 the British are still trying to analyze their defeat in the American Revolution.

This is to obtain an understanding of the greatest defeat of the British Empire and to possibly prevent a similar disaster.

<sup>10</sup> *Annals of Albany*, Vol. 3, p. 122.

Its latest study *The American Revolution* was written by an English professor Eric Robson who died on the eve of the volume's publication.

Robson finds that the Revolution was inevitable. Situated 3,000 miles way from the Mother country, the colonists would naturally desire to run their own affairs, England being too far away to rule intelligently. Separation was bound to come.

When the war came colonial victory was inevitable. Only a military genius could have conquered this large country and its natural resources.

The Revolutionary British generals were not geniuses although only Clinton and Burgoyne were really incompetent.



## CHAPTER TEN

### WATERFORD'S FIRST RURAL LIFE

THE REVOLUTION had given our locality a violent wrench. It had been quite a nuisance for our settlers to carry their seed grain to Albany in the fall and transport it back in the spring to preserve it for planting.

Before the Waterford settlement was made, a rural economy existed. No bridges were built until 1792 (Utica), and at Cohoes in 1795. People lived simply and got about by horseback, horse and wagon, and stage. We have an account of a group of eighteen socially-minded men, traveling in 1796 all the way from Ballston and Stillwater, to Waterford, to listen to a special church sermon. So pleased were they with the Rev. Ogden's effort that they, with others, gave him ten dollars. No time clocks existed in those days, and they quit their farm chore work early in order to reach home in good season after lodge meetings. At first the primitive forest had been so dense as to almost exclude from the ground the light of the sun. But our pioneers had cut and burned spaces for crops while to the north and west of Halfmoon Point the land was known as the Pine Plains. Here as in other States, the British had restrictions against cutting the tallest pines. Some of these giant trees were said to have a diameter of six feet and to be over 200 feet high.<sup>1</sup>

These select pines were reserved as masts for the British "royal" navy and special pains were taken to get them over the Cohoes Falls unbroken or not splintered.

But when the Revolution engulfed our section some of these magnificent trees managed to escape. They were later axe-hewn into giant timbers for our 1804 Union Bridge. For a long time the shining blade of the axe contested for the fame earned by the plow and sickle.

It carved homes in the wilderness and great migrations followed

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<sup>1</sup> *Independent Vermont*, Thompson.

its use. The pioneers at first resented the great forests and ruthlessly burned them in masses until economist Tench Coxe appeared.<sup>2</sup> He showed the settlers that a careful farmer could usually pay for the clearing of his land, from the sale of potash and pearl ash. This crude potassium carbonate came from the burned trees in the form of lye. The lye was obtained by dripping water through the wood ashes. This water-ash was then boiled in iron pots to become "black" potash (blackash) if un-refined. When refined it was called "pearl" ash. It was easily sold in England for soap-making, bleaching, and as a fertilizer. The pearl ash brought up to \$300.00 per ton. By 1832, however, the latter had dropped to \$89.00 per ton in Waterford. Crude fireplaces were used in the earliest days, both for warmth and cooking. These were often of giant size, one early history (Barnes) said they were twelve feet in length, and placed in the middle of the room. In the poorer homes these were placed on the outside wall of the house. Frequently the chimneys were crudely made and winked at fate, being constructed of long sticks coated with mud or plaster.

The first "lucifer" match was not invented until 1830, and making a fire with flint and steel was a real job. The fire was kept alive by burying it in ashes. If it unfortunately "went out" a bit of burning "pine fat" was borrowed in a container from a neighbor (if one lived nearby). Fireplaces are moody things and smoke "getting in your eyes" was not all song stuff. Making a fire was a chore, a giant "back" log four or more feet long being placed in the rear. At the front was sometimes a "front" log with the space between being filled with smaller wood. If a night fire was needed, some unfortunate must frequently rise to feed wood to the fireplace.

A crane with pot-hooks hung over the fire and boiled food was thus obtained. A frying-pan on the coals cooked, broiled or fried meat. Roasts were cooked or browned by being turned on a "spit." Baking was done in a tin oven set in front of the fireplace.

In more pretentious 18th century homes a brick oven would be built in the chimney. When heated by "kindlings" (these later being swept out), the bricks would retain the heat for a long time and the old-fashioned bread and baked beans would thus be cooked.

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<sup>2</sup> *History of Agriculture*, Hedrick.

The house of the settler was built of logs, the chinks daubed with clay and the roof "thatched" with long grass to keep out the rain. The writer saw this type of roof protection still used on the Canadian St. Lawrence, just a few years ago.

In the later and better class of buildings, the logs were hewn square to avoid the need of "chinking." Sometimes the house sides or frames were "mortised" and braced together on the ground, then "raised" into position. When erected, the sides were covered with split oak clapboards; the roof with split cedar shingles fastened by crude hand-wrought nails. The windows would consist of two small lead frames, set with a few tiny diamond shaped panes of either "bubble"<sup>3</sup> or generally plain glass. More frequently, however, oiled paper was used. The window frames were hinged to open outward against the "house." Such buildings generally faced the south which allowed the sun to "shine in squarely" at noon, giving warning of the dinner hour. The doors (frequently with wooden hinges) were of oak and double-planked and nailed together with spikes, the latter being arranged in the form of diamonds.

The kitchen with its "heart of the home," the fireplace, together with the "best room" were the chief apartments. In the latter, used only on "state" occasions, there were no carpets, the floors being "sanded." On the mantel shelf stood the high brass candlesticks with their tray and snuffers. On the walls were family paintings of loved ones, since departed. Here too were the few and then costly books, reading being for improvement and not for pastime.

The furniture was plain; a tall wooden clock, a dresser holding the cherished pewter dishes, a spinning-wheel and perhaps a loom for weaving.

The kitchen with whitewashed walls had barely seven-foot ceilings from which hung bunches of herbs, seed corn and long strings of dried apples.

The country's fireplaces lasted a long time and were supplanted by other devices about 1850. Dr. Eliphalet Nott of Union College invented a coal stove in 1830 and with the fortune he made from it, endowed that educational institution.

The people saved fat and drippings and made both candles and

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<sup>3</sup> See "bubble" glass in Fort Ticonderoga museum buildings.



soap. As living became centered in groups, candle factories came into use. In 1830 our first "candle" factory was set up by Joshua Mors, on Fourth Street in Waterford. This later became renowned for its capacity to use "20 ton of tallow per year."

Our first lamp was copied from the Eskimo, being a shallow vessel with a wick. This and similar lamps burned sperm oil, lamp oil, and "burning fluid."<sup>4</sup>

Benjamin Franklin invented a good lamp which lasted until kerosene came into use in 1850.

The early log cabins had no glass and until 1850 none but the rich painted their homes. Salt was a sheer necessity for the whites, but the Indians had no use for it at all. The Onondagas had a salty spring and told the Jesuits that it was "fouled by a spirit," after which they were told how to make salt.<sup>5</sup>

In 1789 Asa Danforth and Comfort Tyler made thirteen bushels of salt in twelve hours at Salina, and the settlers considered it as precious as gold.<sup>6</sup>

The settlers depended upon the wheel and loom for their clothing. The raw materials were flax and wool. Flax was grown hereabouts as early as 1626 by the colony of New Netherland. It is said that for strength, durability or beauty, a thread of flax fiber is incomparable.<sup>7</sup>

Once every well ordered farm in New York State had its plot of flax, and an acre supplied the needs of an average family. Flax was sown early and as always kept free of weeds both for reasons of growing and processing.

Flax when ripe in July or early August was "pulled" and not cut. The flaxseed was treasured, as linseed oil came from it. The separation of the flax fibers from the useless part of the plant was called "retting" and was done by wetting and sunlight. This took from eight to twenty days.

Next followed the "braking," "swingling" and "hetchelling" which consisted of drawing the fibers across a toothed board which

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4 Account book, Wm. Waldron, July 1, 1859.

5 Jesuit Father Lallemant, 1645.

6 *History of Agriculture*, Hedrick.

7 *Golden Age of Homespun*, J. VanWagenen, Jr., by Cornell Univ. Press and *The Yorker*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, 1954, p. 10.

formed them into a beautiful strand. The fibers then were spun on the flax wheel, a wheel smaller than used for wool. The spinner kept her fingers wet and might produce 2400 yards of thread or yarn per day.

Winter garments, dress goods for women and bed blankets were made from pure wool. The sheep were taken to the mill stream before shearing and here they were both washed and afterward dried. When sheared the wool was picked by hand into a soft woolly mass and then carded with a wire-studded brush.

The spinner whirled the wheel with her right hand and manipulated the thread with her left. "Four skeins" of yarn could be made in a day, and the standing spinner paced at least four miles during the process.

To make cloth the weaving was done on looms and the resultant cloth was dyed with vegetable dyes from herbs and etc., grown in the fields and woodland.

This short description of the uses of flax and wool, shows the rigorous manner of living that the people of Halfmoon and Waterford probably enjoyed in early days.

Our Indians had made and used maple sugar from time immemorial and this was the first sweetening of the settlers. Later honey and sometimes cheap grades of brown sugar from the West Indies were used. Real imported sugar in loaf form was only for the rich.

Salting and smoking were the great preservers, for ice did not come into use until 1828.<sup>8</sup> Cool running water especially in milk rooms was a most valuable possession. Butter and sometimes milk was hung in the cool of wells for without such protection thunderstorms invariably soured the milk.

As time passed and as the farm land was enlarged, food became more plentiful. October and November was hog-killing time and a time of hard work too. An amazing number of by-products came from the pigs.

These were processed and stored away and used until butchering time came again. Each thrifty settler or farmer had his smokehouse

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<sup>8</sup> *Capital Region of New York State*, Kimball.

and some neighborhood families would join in the killing of beeves, the meat being divided among them.

In the very early days salt pork was the standard meat and this with game and fish constituted part of the regular fare. The latter two eatables were despised by our first Irish immigrants.<sup>9</sup>

Waterford's favorite farmland was on the lower terrace along the "Great Road." The soil here was of rich alluvial loam. The upper terrace west of the old Champlain Canal, consisted of clay and sand and was considered practically worthless by the people who had settled along the favorite "Great Road."

Our first settlers were not considered true agriculturists. Farming books state that "in culture, harvesting, and threshing of grain, the colonists were not much advanced beyond Biblical time. Wheat was harvested with the sickle and threshing done by oxen or flail."

Long before the flour mills came, a settler or farmer would cut the top off two or more trees several feet from the ground. These when hollowed out, bowl-like, acted as Indian "mortars" where the corn was pounded into meal. The pounder was hung from a nearby bent tree limb.

If the settler desired hominy instead of cornmeal he would take his flint-corn and remove its hull by soaking it in lye and water. When dry he would pound it in his mortar. These were mediaeval customs but an authority states that "No army in the history of the world made conquests of greater importance to civilization than the men who turned the forests of New York into farms during 1775 to 1825."<sup>10</sup>

Coming closer to people we once knew, we recall that the late Mrs. John D. Sherer stated that her grandfather once "cradled grain" on land which is now our village site; that the ground between First and Fourth streets were fields mostly under cultivation during the Revolution, while the site of the present Knickerbacker steamer house had been a berry patch.

Before telling of our Village site, we mention two farming items, one 122 years old. These indicate that our growing seasons may be changing, although we concede this condition may be part

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<sup>9</sup> *Erie Canal*, S. H. Adams, 1953, pp. 56-57.

<sup>10</sup> *History of Agriculture*, Hedrick,



of a long cycle which will eventually balance up.<sup>11a</sup> The *Waterford Union* of June 20, 1832 printed, "In spite of the backward season, Jacob Clute has raised, without a hotbed, new potatoes, peas and beets, and these eaten on June 14. One of Mr. Clute's beets measured five inches in diameter." The winters too, were then more severe. On Jan. 4, 1835, the Waterford temperature reached 38 below zero at 7:30 A.M.

A personal observation reminds us that the actual spring does not arrive now until a later date. My boyhood days were spent on Peebles Island. On that land my father, an experienced gardener, managed in the 1890's to harvest two crops per season from the same garden. His early potatoes were invariably dug by July 4. Then from the same patch he would harvest several kinds of celery, white and pink, together with winter strains, these kept dormant in a semi-growing state to be eaten during the winter season.

How our neighbors of Troy, New City and Schaghticoke lived during the 1790's is well described in an old "letter" book<sup>11</sup> by Abby Serrat, a young lady coming to Troy from Newport in July of that year. The journey from the latter place then took 21 days.

This young lady, later to become a Peebles, said:

"Coming up the 'North' river to Troy, many little towns and country places could be seen, with rafts of timber and battoes plying the Hudson in front of her Troy home."

Troy, she said had sixty buildings, and the islands in front made it a place of beauty, the whole view being delightful; it was "enchanted ground and those departing from it went with reluctance."

She was the guest of Patroon Colonel Rensselaer for three weeks and she describes him as being a great and gallant man. The winters in Troy were delightful being devoted to "slaying" parties who thought nothing of riding from 9 to 10 miles in the evening. Frequently she counted up to 200 "slays" passing her door each winter day.

No mail deliveries then existed. The people depended upon

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<sup>11</sup> Diary loaned by Mrs. Frank W. Jones, Waterford, a descendant of the Peebles, written in 1790.

<sup>11a</sup> A "trial balance" was reached in January 1957 with a New York State temperature of 55° below zero.

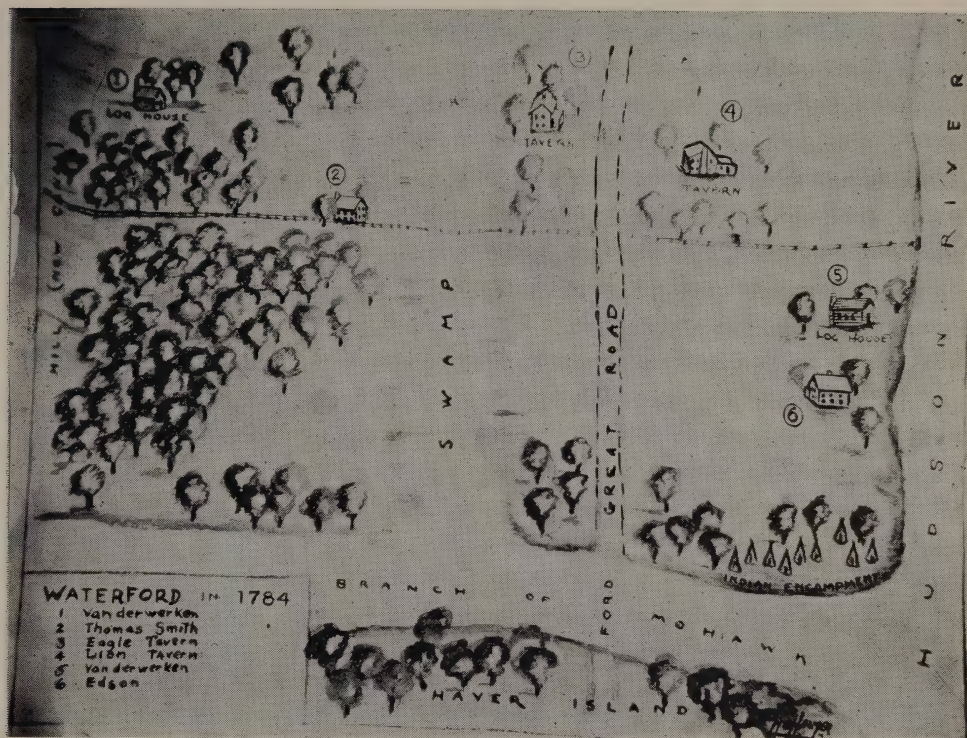
traveling friends for the delivery of their letters. Elkanah Watson was one of the mail carriers for this lady. Plying between Albany and New York was the "Betsey of Troy," the "Master" being John Warren. This vessel frequently carried the lady's letters. Once while living at Schaghticoke she had to depend upon Mr. Hutton, a Troy friend, to seal her letters, no sealing wafers or paper (for an envelope) being available at rural Schaghticoke. There she said, however, a "purling" millstream ran beside their door.

Travel trips were made in the summer. Schenectady was a pleasant town, principally Dutch. These people she reports were not hasty in forming an acquaintance, but they were sincere. West of Albany, Abby Serrat said, was a "glass" house where she saw many articles of glass "blown." While at Albany she went to the English church in the morning and the Dutch church in the afternoon. Albany too was the scene of the winter "assemblies," these being social events having managers who sent out invitations. At one of these, she said, the women started an innovation in hair-dressing. They wore ribbons in cross-shape upon their hair. These people of Albany, she said, lived in elegant style.

Many of the folk, both rich and poor, including her family, were afflicted with the smallpox and she mentions one inoculation for it.

Bennington, which she visited was called the metropolis of Vermont. Nearby Williamstown, she reported, had an elegant seminary or academy built of brick.

This Abigail Serrat married into one of Halfmoon's most prominent colonial families, becoming Hugh Peeble's second wife. Lydia, Hugh's first wife, was Abigail's sister.



HALFMOON POINT OR WATERFORD IN 1784





## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### WATERFORD'S VILLAGE SITE PURCHASED, 1784

HALFMOON POINT was purchased in 1784, almost a century and a half after the first settlers had arrived. A prominent local surveyor, Flores Banker, was hired in 1783 to survey and map this, the oldest incorporated village in New York State. The land called "Nachtenach" by the Mahican Indians was first deeded by Van Schaick's widow to Jan Jacobse Van Noorstrant on June 26, 1677.<sup>1</sup> The latter also received with it, two "morgens" (four acres) of ground on Haver Island. Incidentally, the latter was rich silt land, free from brush, and thereby valuable to the early settlers.

Van Noorstrant agreed to pay for it sixty and six whole beaver skins<sup>2</sup> or its equivalent, in grain or work. So, this old village land was first sold for about two hundred and eleven dollars and twenty cents. Van Noorstrant seemingly did not finish paying for the land for the same widow Van Schaick sold it again to Roelof Garretse Vanderwerken in 1686. This tract of land covered far more than the village site, embracing 1124 acres. A map with this book shows the land as being a deed from Mrs. Annetie Lievers to Roelof Garretse (Vanderwerken) dated February 4, 1686-87.

The final buyers of the actual village site appear in 1784. Old accounts name them as being Colonel Jacobus Van Schoonhoven, Col. Middlebrook, Ezra Hickock, Judge White and others. Research by the author reveals that these others doubtless were Ira and Moses Scott, Matthew Gregory, Henry Davis, John Connell, Amos Porter, Hezkiah Ketchum, John Petitt, and John Watson. This total of thirteen names gives almost perfect agreement with Waterford's first history<sup>3</sup> quote, "In the year 1784 twelve adventurous spirits, leaving behind them the settlements of Connecticut, and seeking for themselves a new home, in their search arrived at a beautiful

<sup>1</sup> *History of Cohoes*, Masten, 1876, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Beaver skins were valued at \$3.20 each.

<sup>3</sup> *Waterford*, 1794-1912, Waterford Study Club.

spot lying at the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk. Struck with admiration at its beauty, and seeing at once its many advantages of location and natural scenery, they conceived the idea that here would be the spot to lay the foundations of what they fondly hoped would in time grow into a large and flourishing city."

The land of the 1955 village site is described under "Waterford's Civic Details" since more ground was added to Banker's map in 1793, 1803, and 1805. This modified map (No. 2) is included with this book.

### WATERFORD INCORPORATED IN 1794

Waterford, the oldest incorporated village in New York State, was charter-incorporated on March 25, 1794 by the New York Legislature in Chap. No. 36 of the Laws of 1794. It is one of the few villages in the State operating under such a special charter. During its early days of "Halfmoon Point" it was the first settlement in what came to be Saratoga County. At first it was embodied in Albany County, but on February 17, 1791 was separated from it, becoming part of Saratoga County.<sup>4</sup>

Waterford's or Halfmoon Point's first village Trustees were—Hezkiah Ketchum, Jacobus Van Schoonhoven, Matthew Gregory, Ebenezer Keeler, John Petitt, Duncan Olifant and Thomas Smith. Four of these Trustees, also Village founders, were to serve until May of 1795. Men were equal in those days and there was no President. Fire, the great destroyer, was rated as more important. The Trustees voted to compel the village "Freeholders" to equip themselves with both firebuckets and tools to extinguish fires, with a fine of 40 shillings for non-compliance. In addition, no less than fifteen inhabitants were named to care for the "fire-engines" tools and fire-fighting "instruments."

In the phrasing of this "incorporation" act, Troy was quite out-classed by Waterford. Seven whole chapters were devoted to our village, while Troy was given but two, it being added that that place should also have the same privileges granted to the "inhabitants and trustees of Waterford."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *History of Saratoga County*, Sylvester, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> Chapter XXXVI, Laws of New York State, (Waterford's Incorporation), 1794.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE STAGECOACHES, TURNPIKES, TAVERNS, AND PACKETS

COHOES was a youngster in 1795. The bridge across the Mohawk, built in that year greatly helped transportation on both sides of the river and actually made us better neighbors.

Our strongest ties, both civic and financial, existed, however, with our good neighbor Lansingburg, for we had grown up together.

Theirs was the former Indian land Tascamcatick which had been granted to Robert Saunders by Governor Lovelace on September 1, 1670, under James II.

Part of this Steene (stone) Arabia Patent was sold to Abraham Lansing on June 21, 1763, thus becoming Lansingburg. It was however, called "New City" up to 1771.<sup>2</sup>

Lansingburg, now having outgrown its first Dutch name of "Nieuw Stadt" (New City) was Waterford's intimate companion during stage days, river improvements and the building of one of the country's most renowned bridges, not to mention sharing its preachers for our early churches.

Let us not forget either, that as early as March 14, 1809, the "Inhabitants of Waterford and Lansingburg gave notice of an appeal to the next legislature to erect a dam across the Hudson, below the middle sprout of the Mohawk."

This, they said,<sup>1</sup> was the best way to improve navigation for the country at large. We waited, however, 14 long years for this event to arrive, and the dam was placed much farther downstream when it came.

Waterford's alliance with Lansingburg indicates too the poverty of the State in permitting such municipalities to dredge rivers and the like.

The stagecoaches of Lansingburg's Annanias Platt came in 1789

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<sup>1</sup> *Lansingbury Gazette*, Jan. 7, 1800.

<sup>2</sup> *Gilead Church History*, J. A. Barnett, 1821.

to blend us still closer together. This enterprising man finally linked Waterford, Lansingburg, Troy and Albany with a fleet of twenty stages, crossing the Hudson at Broad Street, Waterford, and at Albany with ferries. Our two "over the river" communities irked for fifteen years by the inconvenience of ferry river crossings finally erected the sturdy Union Bridge in 1804, while Albany for 224 years suffered a gondola existence, being served by ferries from 1642 until 1866.

Distance meant nothing to Annanias Platt. We have his signature as Commissioner on a survey sheet, planning to run a turnpike road from Waterford to Whitehall, N. Y., the latter, in 1815, according to the survey, being on the west line of Vermont." This Waterford and Whitehall turnpike actually came into being. It had a tumultuous career and is mentioned later.

Platt was a former Lansingburg inn-keeper and also carried the U. S. mail to and from Albany at four pence per letter.

The stages were very uncomfortable. They had no springs and frequently the passengers snatched fence rails to pry the coach from the mud holes. This feature brought into being the plank roads and the turnpikes. The stage drivers knew what to expect and some started their trips at three in the summer time, and four a.m. in the winter. In the year 1824 it took six days and seven nights to reach Rochester from Albany. The coaches were drawn by four horses and would carry up to twelve passengers. Annanias Platt was warmly received. He charged four shillings from Troy to Albany and carried twenty pounds of baggage free for passengers. The taverns and inns were inseparable from the stages, being as closely linked as gasoline and autos are in 1955. On one nearby run there were 50 taverns in 51 miles. The travelers were about worn out at the end of a day's travel and welcomed the tavern's relaxation. The innkeepers were neighborly people, who as time advanced found a better living feeding stage travelers, than by just farming. Those who had horse stalls, found innkeeping especially lucrative. With hay at \$20.00 per ton the innkeepers charged \$1.00 to feed a pair of horses or a yoke of oxen.

It did not impair the dignity either, of the forty-seven Half-moon precinct innkeepers to pay two British pounds for a liquor-

selling license in 1788 to 1796. Some of these innkeepers were the descendants and scions of the most prominent people of that period and they did not hesitate to sell liquor.

Waterford village's stage center in 1804 was at the "Sign of the Lion," (the Lion Tavern) at "Waterford's Hotel and Stage House," on Ferry (or later Broad Street).<sup>3</sup>

At this time our earliest map shows steps leading down the river bank where passengers descended to take the ferry across the Hudson, which connected with Platt's stages at Lansingburg.

Still farther north was the Halfmoon Ford or Ferry (once Leversies) and last called Lansing's. The landing on the Lansingburg side was just north of the high rock at what is now Pleasantdale. Not far away was the old Lansingburg Tavern, later known as the "Abbey." This was said to have been built about the time of the Revolution. Old Lansingburg people have passed down the statement that stagecoaches stopped to change horses at this ancient inn, on the way from New York to Saratoga. This supports the statement of a Waterford slave-woman, Mrs. Lattimer, who, working at the site of the McCoy place, said that wagons crossed the Hudson here, (no Troy dam then) but during freshets the passage was dangerous. The McCoy site was the Waterford end of the Ford. Lansing's Ferry still has a most beautiful and easy approach for those coming to the old Hudson ferry down "Marion" Avenue at Pleasantdale. It has no grades or hills and far exceeds our Halfmoon or Waterford's access to the same water crossing.

Ashley's Tavern in Troy was a notable stopping place. Over the door of that tavern stood the sign—

"This gate hangs low,  
It hinders none:  
Refresh, then pay,  
and travel on."

Strange to say, the stages lasted until 1846. But between 1790 and the latter date, came an important period, the days of the Turnpikes. These were hastened by the building of more bridges. With bridges in place the great obstacle was the primitive roads. The

<sup>3</sup> *Waterford Gazette*, Jan. 31, 1804.



turnpikes were incorporated and were built by investing people, the toll charges returning them a fair profit. Since roadways have been called the boundary line between the savage and civilized state of society, these turnpikes indicated that we were growing up.

At each six to ten miles of Turnpike roads were toll gates at which all travelers must pay, and at the crossroad intersections were clusters of guide posts to aid the wayfarers.

Stagecoaches with two horses paid turnpike owners 12 cents. A single horse and driver paid 4 cents, all rates being for each ten miles or so. Many of these toll roads came from the interior to navigable streams like the Hudson and Mohawk, and were produce carriers. These roads were not only frequented by stages, but also by great canvas-covered wagons of the Canastota type, which carried a hundred or more bushels of wheat.

Three to eight horses hauled these large wagons and the rate was \$100.00 per ton from Albany to Buffalo. It is said that the toll charges, repeated between toll gates, made the cost of travel and transportation too high for farmers and business men.<sup>4</sup>

Courtesy was as rare then as it is now. The stage drivers and large produce carriers had developed an imperious code and lighter vehicles must pull off the roads to permit stage drivers and heavier vehicles to pass.

The coming of the sawmills brought us the "plank" roads and helped fill in the boggy places which had upset the passengers and caused bruises and bumps as the drivers hurriedly tried to "make time." The winter brought joy to traveling visitors for they then wrote that they traveled "faster and easier."

Local people such as Charles Veazie,<sup>4a</sup> and Orsamus Eaton of Troy, together with Gould and Gilbert of Albany, made coaches which greatly improved the ordeals of traveling and also made their names famous throughout the land.

The building of Turnpikes became a source of local investment. In November of 1835 forty-six Waterford citizens incorporated to

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<sup>4</sup> *Growth of the United States*, R. V. Harlow, 1943.

<sup>4a</sup> In 1831 Veazie had a carriage shop at Cannon Place, Troy—Eaton and Gilbert's on Troy's Union Station site.

invest \$100,000.00 to build a turnpike from Waterford to West Troy over the Mohawk Islands.<sup>5</sup>

Then in a Lansingburg paper appeared notice of a road to be built by one McAdam. He was a daring Scotsman who before 1790 developed a most successful method of road construction. It was free from clay, earth or chalky stone, McAdam using instead crushed stone of six ounces in weight. The road had a depth of ten inches and would stand both traffic and frost. Seemingly the 1835 Waterford project did not materialize, for we read that a McAdam turnpike was finally built from Gibbonsville (Watervliet) to Waterford over the Mohawk Islands using the railroad bridges.

Waterford had two turnpikes. These were important enough to be entered by Benj. DeWitt<sup>6</sup> among those others capitalized in New York State at a total value of five and one-half million dollars in 1807.

The Waterford and Whitehall turnpike was the most important of the two local pikes. It made history and, finally clashing with the law, ended violently near Waterford.

While the Waterford-Whitehall Turnpike ended badly, it began under the best circumstances. Eight hundred and thirty-four shares of stock were sold at \$180.00 per share, beginning Sept. 1, 1817. Among the stock buyers were the elite of Waterford's lawyers and businessmen. The largest area stockholder seems to have been the grandson of our local famous Revolutionary general. The stock shares had one objectionable feature; the buyer was liable for future assessments.

The highway was 64 miles long starting at our village line and ending at Whitehall, then in Vermont. A map<sup>7</sup> shows Vermont's once disputed land as beginning at Hudson-Falls. It then followed the course of the Hudson River and next went northward some four miles west of Lake Champlain.

The starting date of the turnpike is not known, but finally on Feb. 1849, it was indicted and convicted for maintaining a public nuisance. (9-Barbour-160). It was said to have neglected everything

<sup>5</sup> *Waterford Atlas*, Nov. 30, 1835.

<sup>6</sup> *History of Agriculture New York State*, U. P. Hedrick, 1939.

<sup>7</sup> Map, *Independent Vermont*, Chas. M. Thompson.

"except the taking of tolls." In its later years it was known as the "Stillwater & Waterford" turnpike after which it lost a judgment, the jury finding that it had no "hard roadbed nor ditches on each side." Finally, in 1863 a mob, collecting near Waterford tore down their last remaining toll gate. The turnpike had stayed too long. No doubt it was of great use from 1818 to 1840. But by 1824-25 the people were using the canal packets for travel and the railroad came in 1835.

The main drawback of the Waterford-Whitehall organization was weak capitalization. Its total funds of \$150,000.00 would be almost insignificant to-day, since 64 miles of ordinary 24 foot concrete highway would now cost at least nine and one half million dollars.<sup>8</sup>

Their long survey route with its nearly 500 survey determinations together with machinery, would then take at least \$10,000. This would leave less than \$2200.00 for each mile of hard roadway for grades and two side ditches.

Perhaps they would employ that contractor offering on September 16, 1800<sup>9</sup> to make eighty miles of road on the Mohawk "pike" for \$600.00 per mile.

The turnpikes bring to mind another phase of early business apart from stages and produce-carrying. All humanity walked along these roads and especially the peddlers and their packs. With packs humped across their shoulders or with carts crowded with clothing, pottery, brooms, clocks, jewelry, combs or a thousand other odd articles, they were the visitants of the farms and rural homes. While some may have been dishonest, they were almost indispensable to the farmers' wife. The man, with the pack on his back, was the forerunner of the country-store.

These traveling merchants, of small degree, did not disappear with the turnpikes but lasted well into the 1900's. Great things often have modest beginnings. The grandson of one of these early packmasters is now known to be the head of a great chain store with thousands and thousands of debtor accounts.

We can think of no better fulfillment of the saying that "History

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<sup>8</sup> New York State Dept. Public Works letter, March 1, 1954.

<sup>9</sup> *Lansingburg Weekly Gazette*, Sept. 16, 1800.



repeats itself," than in the recurrence of the Turnpikes, once departed. Now after a full century of slumber new toll roads, costing an average of a million and a quarter dollars a mile to build are here again. The fabulous New Jersey turnpike has collected nearly nineteen million dollars in tolls in the last twelve months.

Since the first toll road was built by the Assyrians, thirty-nine hundred years ago, between Syria and Babylon, and with this new rage of turnpikes upon us, it now appears that they like the poor, will be with us always.

We close the subject by hoping that our highway commissions will not force all of us to ride upon these maddened lanes, but will give us a good road, here and there, amid the shade of the country trees.

Waterford's attractive geographical position, beside two rivers, has made it an important transportation point for well over two centuries.

The Mohawk fixed Waterford's name and the Hudson brought the once-renowned Union bridge, while both streams helped make Waterford the terminal of two great canal systems.

Before the coming of the railroad in 1835, the local Champlain canal was a prominent means of passenger transportation. Canal "Packets" drawn by one or two horses or mules were used. These were light "fast" boats being limited by law in 1822 to "four miles an hour." They had cabins, very hot, the passengers said, where meals were served. The baggage was piled on the cabin top joined by those few bold passengers who elected to sit there and did not forget to duck their heads while passing beneath the fifteen low bridges over the canal between Broad St., Waterford and South Street in Mechanicville, and many many, more above the latter city. Many such bridges were erected to placate the farmers. Benj. Lossing tells almost a century ago, of traveling by such a packet to Bemis Heights from Waterford, in from three to four hours.<sup>10</sup> The passenger packets were given special privileges in passing locks and slower moving canal boats and were accordingly deemed a nuisance by the passenger carriers.

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<sup>10</sup> *Field Book of the Revolution*, Vol. 1, pp. 43-44, Lossing.

The Diary of Waterford's Laura Cramer Ormsby<sup>11</sup> gives valuable data on local transportation and other village matters from 1849 to 1905.

The ancestry of this family included the Hon. John Cramer, a prominent lawyer of this village. He was born in a wagon near Schuylerville while his parents were fleeing to Fitzgeralds near Waterford, during an Indian raid in 1779.

Mrs. Ormsby's books give a particular quality to early traveling. She too used the canal packets, and notes that the traveling time from Waterford to Schuylerville was six hours. She was a noted traveler and the span of her active life covered all travel phases, from horses and canal boats to the "electrics" on Sept. 4, 1889. A study of her work again confirms the natural honesty and the truthfulness of the older Waterford people. Several items in this book had already been written from accounts given by folk who have passed on. It is a pleasure to have some of these confirmed by Mrs. Ormsby's pages, for the scarcest item in our 1956 world—is the truth.

She mentions "Old Fisk's Hearse" a one horse shay, which carried passengers between Waterford and Troy and described by Mabel Viele Gordon in "Waterford 1794-1912." Mrs. Ormsby's entry is really an obituary saying, "Fisk doesn't run his car anymore!"

Another comment under date of September 1851, "A party of Indians arrived and have pitched their tents on the Battery." This was of great interest to this archeologically-inclined writer for it confirmed the tale about the Indians told me by a very old man in my boyhood days, which is mentioned in preceding chapters.

In 1850 a winter trip to Albany, says Laura Cramer Ormsby, meant using Carrier's omnibus to Troy, then to Greenbush by other horse-drawn vehicles, and then walking across the ice into Albany. Albany had no bridge until 1866. To return by Mr. Carrier's bus from Troy to Waterford, the traveler must be in Troy at 5 p.m. for that was the last run for the night. The people lived a slower and perhaps a longer life in those days. At home at nine in the evening was the rule for our social events.

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<sup>11</sup> Grandmother of Charles Cramer Ormsby Jr. (Diary loaned by Katherine L. K. Ormsby).

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### HUDSON RIVER SLOOP TRADE, WATERFORD AND LANSINGBURG

THE HUDSON RIVER could easily have been called the "state road" as late as 1799. It was the unfailing route of travel, even with its natural handicaps. Waterford manufacturers advertised our place as being at the head of sloop navigation, on the Hudson. They failed to add that both Waterford and Lansingburg must choose the spring freshet season to load and ship their sloops.

A traveler, Duke R. Liancourt,<sup>1</sup> tells of local sloop trade in 1795. He said that the freight rate from New York City (Lansingburg) to Albany was twopence a barrel; that the largest ship was sixty ton, and at Albany the vessels received half their cargo at the dock and the rest when the sloop had been moved to mid-stream. This was of course due to shallow water. The Waterford shippers were smarter and loaded their sloops all at once. This was accomplished by the construction of a sloop landing pier which extended 244 feet into where the Mohawk and Hudson water mingled.

This pier was at the southeastern extremity of Halfmoon Point at the "Battery." Another traveler, Elkanah Watson sounded our Hudson in 1788 and said the water was eighteen inches deep at New City. At flood or highwater stage there would be better than four feet. At such times the principal local commodity, grain, would be shipped.

In those day Waterford and Lansingburg were great neighbors; they needed each other. Besides in that time paternalism was absolutely unknown. Those communities which needed improvements raised the funds or went without. So, it came about that on February 5, 1799 the inhabitants of Waterford and Lansingburg appealed to the Albany "House of Assembly" for authority to improve navi-

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Troy*, A. J. Weise, 1876, pp. 42-43.



gation between Lansingburg and Troy. Our Jacobus Van Schoonhoven was Commissioner of the navigation project and the money was raised in Waterford and Lansingburg.

These communities worked so vigorously, that by September 17th of the same year the so-called "Riffs" between Lansingburg and Troy had been removed. They cut a channel through the solid rock, almost a thousand feet long. The cut was 30 feet wide and four feet deep, giving a depth of five feet at lowest tide. The people of these villages were both happy and modest over this river improvement. They simply stated that the work was done "by enclosing several acres of the river, inside a dam."<sup>2</sup> They liked it so well that a second project was started on March 11, 1800. This covered additional work in the Hudson's channel between Lansingburg, Troy and Albany and cost \$28,000.00 This took longer and was finished November 3, 1802. It was 45 feet wide and deep enough to allow vessels of 50 ton to pass "any season of the year." The exultant news editor<sup>3</sup> now wrote, "navigation is as practicable as it ever will be between Troy and Albany."

The money for this last job was raised by the familiar 1790-1800 lottery method. They sold 22,600 tickets at \$5.00 each, the high prize of \$15,000.00 being won by two farmers from Easton. About 66% of the tickets were blank, in addition to a deduction of 15% of money raised. The faith of these area people in their navigable Hudson was fully sustained. In 1802, one thousand nine hundred vessels were sailing the Hudson.

The *Waterford Atlas* of June 17, 1835 announced the entry of the first Waterford steamboat. It was owned by the Messrs. Eddy, (the Waterford Ink Mfrs.).

With a party of 50 or 60 passengers, it sailed to the Troy dam from Waterford in fifteen minutes. Soon it went on a Waterford-Albany schedule, making two daily trips.

The same paper, issue of July 31, 1833, bemoans the loss of a sloop carrying 2000 bushels of grain, 1000 barrels of pork and the rest in lumber. It was owned by Messrs. Todd (First Waterford Postmaster), "Scott," and Dan Twilliger and sunk near West Point.

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<sup>2</sup> *Lansingburg Gazette*, Sept. 17, 1799.

<sup>3</sup> *Lansingburg Gazette*, Sept. 17, 1799.

The navigation of the Hudson will be incomplete if we fail to mention two whales who came visiting before the dredging was done, way back in March of 1647.<sup>4</sup> A long and severe winter was followed by a high freshet.

Riverside inhabitants gazed in wonder as one whale, failing to turn about and go back with his mate, continued on, too far north. He was stranded and died on a shallow isle now gone. It was near old Bolton Hall now exactly opposite George's Marine Shop at 106th Street, Lansingburg. For a short time the natives were busy, cutting up and roasting the visitor for its oil. The job was too big or the pace too slow for soon the waters of the Hudson were covered with grease as the remainder of the rotting mammal stenchd the air, it was said, for a distance of two (Dutch) miles.

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<sup>4</sup> *History of Cohoes*, Masten, 1876, pp. 5 and 6.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### OUR FIRST BRIDGES

THE GREATEST need in 1795 was transportation. The people were not quite prisoners, but rivers and wide spaces were handicaps. We had no bridges and surplus crops could not be disposed of advantageously. Ten or twenty miles was the limit beyond which it did not pay to transport goods overland.<sup>1</sup> Elkanah Watson, a distinguished 1791 traveler said the quagmire roads were a disgrace to the State. Local people are far back as 1771 requested Albany's Common Council to consider a bridge across the Mohawk to connect Halfmoon and Cohoes. That body seemed receptive to the idea, saying that a bridge would encourage settlements to the north of it. But, nearly a quarter of a century was to pass before the bridge came. On July 24, 1795 a 900-foot wooden bridge was completed.

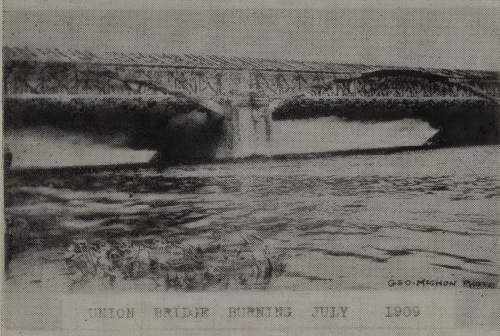
This Northside Bridge ran on an angle across the river and rested upon thirteen rough stone piers. The latter, said traveling Count Liancourt, were not remarkable for either solidity or neatness.<sup>2</sup> The Count was correct. On April 4, 1801 the bridge's lessees, Mathew Gregory and Gradus Van Schoonhoven, declared that the bridge had been much injured by ice and water and asked permission to repair it and then charge higher tolls. This first bridge, however, proved to be of the greatest aid to farmers hauling their crops and to Annanias Platt's stage route. The Mohawk was a turbulent stream. Ice damaged the three Cohoes bridges that crossed the river up to 1832. One, probably of the Hayward-lattice type, was burned. This last bridge was unsatisfactory and the people did not regret its passing. The Hayward and its 1854 successor had mule-towing paths on the east side to haul Champlain canalboats across the Mohawk. Many were the canal boats which during high water broke their towing ropes and came to rest against the Cohoes

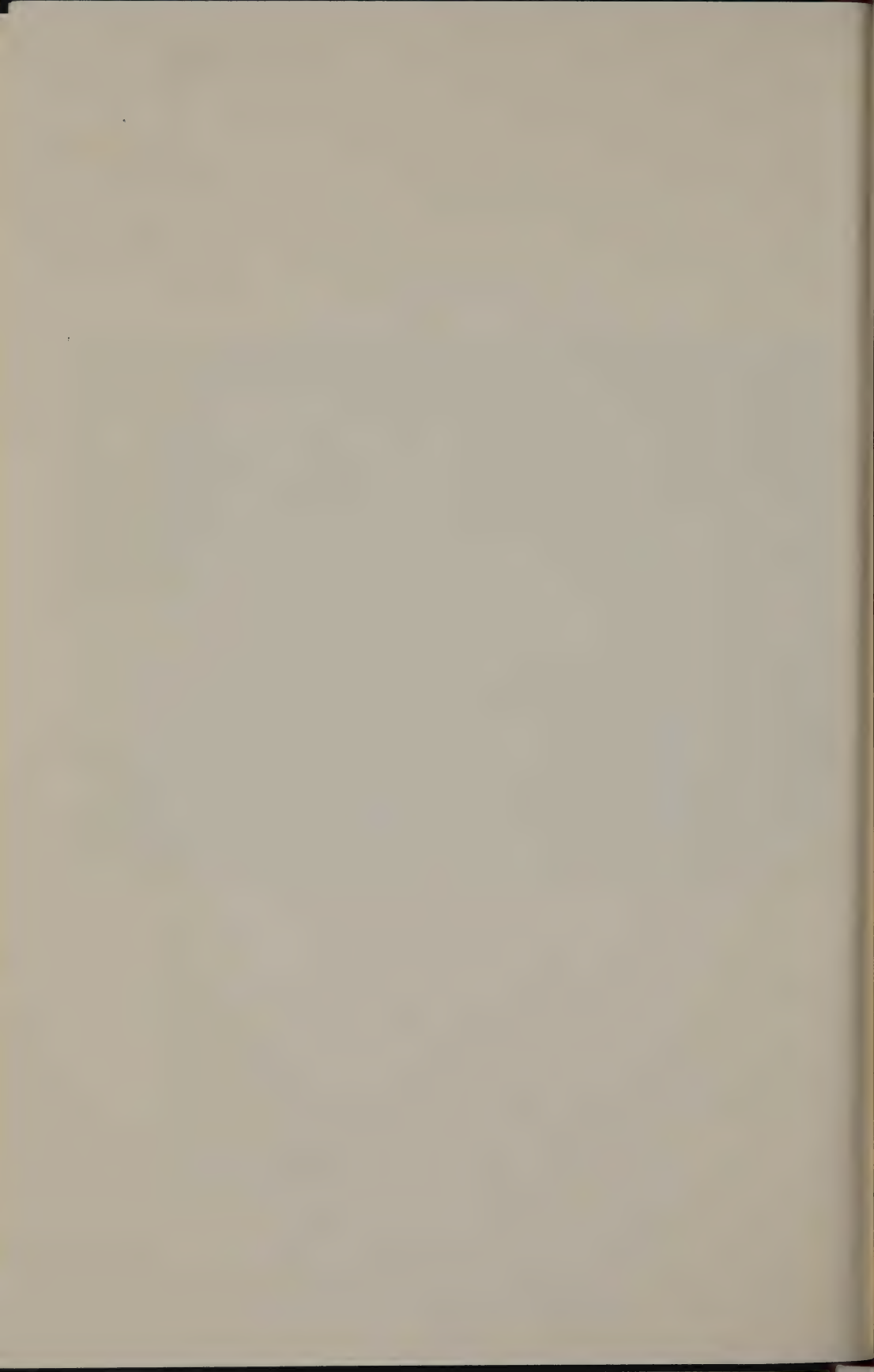
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<sup>1</sup> *Rural Economy*, Bidwell, p. 317.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Cohoes*, A. H. Masten, 1876, p. 34.







State dam below the bridge a century ago. Now a New York State concrete bridge connects Northside and Cohoes. Here the United States Geological Survey registers both the turbidity and total water flow of the Mohawks drainage area of 3456 square miles. Its water flow per day for the past 33 years has averaged 2.701 billion gallons.

### THE UNION BRIDGE, 1804-1909

The ancient Hudson River, 154 miles long seaward to Waterford, had never been spanned by a bridge until 1804 when this famous "Union" Bridge was erected. It was an honor to the rugged individuals of Waterford and Lansingburg to devise the idea, supply the funds and to build this renowned structure to last for 105 years. They were financially unaided by either State or Federal governments. In fact, we and these neighboring people seemed to have built for eternity, since we recall that even in 1951 the New York State legislature rejected Waterford's plea to take over gratis, this important link in the highway system. Waterford and Lansingburg inhabitants were from the first a smooth-working team, and the Union Bridge was their second big step. Back in 1799 they had similarly pooled their ability and dredged the Hudson river for better sloop trade. Now, transportation was again on the move. The stagecoaches were busy with passengers, but there was always one more river to cross. To help, we and our good neighbor Lansingburg, first spanned the Hudson.

The New York Legislature was thrifty. On April 15, 1800 it passed an act to authorize the building of toll bridges across the Hudson—by private groups.

On March 5, 1802 the same authority passed an act to "Incorporate<sup>3</sup> a body corporate and politic, the President and Directors of the Union Bridge Company, for building a bridge across the Hudson river at or near a ferry called Hamilton & Scott's from Waterford to Lansingburg, forever and hereafter to have continued succession—Shares, \$50.00 each, not to exceed 500 shares," (later 1000 shares). Continuing, "this body may take land on each side of river—where they may decide to build, and shall pay for value

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<sup>3</sup> *Lansingburg Gazette*, March 5, 1802.



of the land for gate and toll house, with three freeholders to settle disputes. Bridge to be 20 foot wide, well-covered with plank not less than 3 inches thick and sides to have good substantial railings. One opening between piers must be 100 foot wide to permit passage of rafts and boats."

State law was involved to the extent that "when built the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Rensselaer (or any one of them) after inspection shall certify that the bridge is sufficiently complete and built and will admit passage of teams with loaded carriages—then it will be lawful for the President and Directors to erect a gate at either end of said bridge, and demand and take for use of said Corporation a toll, and it shall be lawful for the toll gatherers to stop every foot passenger and person driving a carriage—any person causing damage must pay treble the cost of damage." Other laws and restrictions follow, ending with this real oration, "This shall be declared a public act and a construed benignity for every beneficial purpose herein intended."

The act was indeed a formidable legal form and the public, apart from the great benefits derived from the bridge, found it just that. The bridge charter of 1803 also prohibited any other bridge within two miles and there is a news account of a ferry-boat being seized on an island below us for carrying passengers across the Hudson. The act also provided that after 75 years the bridge should become N. Y. State property. But in 1813 the bridge's charter was amended to cover the repayment of all repairs and upkeep plus 14 per cent of the total sum invested. Since repairs and upkeep are like taxes—always with us—it is very likely (with the added 14 per cent), that it would have forever remained a toll bridge, if not for the first and last serious fire which happened in 1909, one hundred and five years after the bridge's completion.

On March 1, 1803 the following first Union Bridge officials were named:

John Dickson (president)	Samuel Stewart
Charles Selden	Guert V. Van Schoonhoven
John Woolworth	John T. Close
Albert Pawling	

Stewart, Van Schoonhoven and John T. Close were Waterford people. Preparing for the bridge, the *Lansingburg Gazette* on March 6, 1804 carried an advertisement for, "40 stone masons to build abutments and piers of a bridge across Hudson River, the work to commence the 5th day of May, next."

By June 19, the paper continued, "the erection is proceeding rapidly. The abutments, (on shore sides) and one of three piers are already near finished, and the frames of the arches are in a state of equal preparedness. Concerning the abutments and piers, there is not the least doubt that they will render the bridge secure from ice in spring seasons." These piers, 75-85 feet long, tapered at the front were 20-25 feet wide at the top. Their total height was 23-33 feet and at that time they were 18 feet above water. The expressed opinion of the builders that the stone work would "render the bridge safe," has in these 152 years following, been fully justified. But since this stone work still holding a bridge was made before modern cement was devised and since the stones are held together by natural cement or tarras<sup>4</sup> bound with iron, this writer believes that this 150-year-old stone work demands replacement. This opinion was given to top but uninterested New York State officials in 1953.

New York State is directly responsible too for permitting the bridge owners to erect a new modern steel bridge on piers and abutments then, in 1909, 105 years old.

The old Union Bridge was commenced in May of 1804 and was finished and opened for traffic on Dec. 3 of the same year. The bridge was 797 feet long. It had four spans,<sup>5</sup> 154-161-176 and 180 feet long respectively. Three lines of Burr arch trusses provided two 11 foot roadways. The bridge was 34 feet wide overall, there also being footwalks on the south with another added later on the north side. After the Waterford Gas Works had retired from business, a heavy gas main carried gas from Lansingburg, this adding materially to the burning of the structure in 1909.

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<sup>4</sup> "Tufa" or Tarras is a volcanic dust rock or a porous Italian limestone or sometimes a semi-crystalline volcanic rock having feldspar. (Data contributed by A. Marion Button, Waterford, N. Y.)

<sup>5</sup> *Covered Bridge Topics*, Dec. 1947, Richard S. Allen.

Theodore Burr of Oxford, N. Y. the famous truss inventor was the bridge architect and his arch design first used in the Waterford bridge was the prototype of others also of steel used all over the country. James McElroy was head mason and Burr's assistant was Samuel Shelly. He supervised the erection of huge timbers held together with white oak pins and wedges. Later were added steel straps and hand forged nuts and bolts holding the truss timbers in line. Sam Shelley had a big chore. We have knowledge of one red pine arch timber 65 feet long x 14 x 15 inches wide, being "inched" into place with no aid but block, tackle and human strength. All the timber came from the "Pine Plains" at Halfmoon and Clifton Park. The bridge was not covered when first built and there has been controversy as to whether it was merely repaired and covered in 1814 or completely rebuilt. From the *Waterford Atlas* of March 11, 1835, we quote the following "Bridge cost \$50,000.00 in 1804, being uncovered in 1812 was found to be decaying and \$20,000.00 added to stock and repair it. The bridge as it now stands in 1835 was finished in 1814."

The covering of the bridge was a wise move. After 105 years it was said to be the oldest and one of the best known bridges in the United States as well as the best preserved.

The opening of the bridge on December 3, 1804, became a holiday for the people of both Waterford and Lansingburg. Seventeen cannon were fired and a procession which formed in Lansingburg, marched across the bridge to Gerardus Van Schoonhoven's old Eagle Hotel on Second Street. Here a dinner was served for the marchers by the bridge company. Governor Morgan Lewis and other state officials attended—"with a number of respectable gentlemen from the adjacent villages and Albany." The latter were said to have been green with envy, since 62 more years were to pass before the capital city of Albany had its first bridge across the Hudson.

Waterford was then sparsely settled,<sup>6</sup> there not being more than 130 voters in 1804. Alanson Douglas was President of the company in 1805, and personally wrote out all the records. He was a careful and thrifty man. For example, old newspapers say that he carried

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<sup>6</sup> *News Scrap Book*, Mrs. (Brewster), J. Irving Wright.



a sizing ring when buying eggs. All small eggs according to his "ring" were rejected. The laborers on his bridge were given 75 cents and three glasses of rum for wages. For teams and crews hauling timber, he gave \$6.50 and 12 glasses of rum. John Sturgis was the first toll collector. He added to either Douglas's income or his own, by selling spruce beer to farmers crossing the bridge. We shall see how in the War of 1812 this trait of parsimony connected with the bridge's operation brought Sturgis into direct conflict with the Armed Forces of the United States of America. Sturgis lost!

After the covering of the bridge in 1814 the tolls rates fixed in 1805, which were 18 cents for farmers and 25 cents for "gentlemen's" wagons, were again increased. In 1821 still another measure deemed "arbitrary" by the newspapers was added. This forbade ferries from operating for a distance of four miles of the bridge, two miles above and below. This resulted in the seizing of a ferry-boat owned by a Mr. Payne which ran from Lansingburg to Van Schaick Island.

It happened however that the more ancient Halfmoon Ferry and later bearing the names of both Lansing and McCoy, was located just a mile to the north and had existed many, many years before the Union bridge was built. This fact demanded special consideration. The Lansing family on the Hudson's east shore and the McCoy's at Waterford on the west side (one mile from Broad St.) were as a result finally given free passage over the bridge. The farmers became cute. They paid to cross the bridge when their wagons were loaded and heavy. When returning lightly burdened they chose to return by Lansings' ford which was free. But one old Waterford person, named Lattimer, and said to be a slave of McCoy's, said the Lansing ford or ferry was very dangerous for such passage when the water was high.

Then came the days of the horse-cars. The fee for cars to cross the bridge was fixed at \$750.000 annually. When the car line proved a success, the toll was raised to \$2000.00. In 1835 the steam railway appeared. The Rensselaer & Saratoga R. R. already running to Ballston from Waterford wished to extend its services to Troy.

It made contact with the Union Bridge people. It wished to cross the Union at Waterford, from Lansingburg. It is said the obstruc-

tions and prices demanded by the bridge directors caused the railroad company to give up this idea. Instead the railroad built a 1600-foot bridge at Troy and also built three other bridges over islands in the Mohawk delta to connect with Waterford. These Union bridge tactics upped the blood-pressure of local news writers, but in the meanwhile the bridge was growing old gracefully.

The great wooden arches became smooth from the countless loads of hay passing through the darkened structure as the teams made their way to Troy.

In the year 1866 the name of Knickerbacker became associated with the Union Bridge. Thomas A. Knickerbacker with John Titcomb and David T. Lamb bought the controlling interest in this successful venture. We are now forced to concede that the alleged egg-measuring and frugality of Alanson Douglass had finally reached fruition. He owned and sold this new group seven hundred shares of stock out of a total of 1000 existing shares.

Sought far and wide by covered bridge admirers are the toll tokens of these old structures. We have examined some remaining from the old Union Bridge and find the top rate of passage in the Knickerbacker era cost 13c. for a vehicle with two horses and a driver. Similar passage with one horse cost 10c. while those afoot paid 2c.

The ordinary electric trolley cars came on Sept. 4, 1889<sup>7</sup> but their weight meant nothing to this sturdy bridge. The appearance, however, of the 25-ton Hudson Valley interurbans in the 1900's caused some brow-wrinkling. Would this century-old structure safely carry these monsters? The matter was settled by a carefully built model of the 160-foot span, which when appropriately weighted gave an affirmative answer. Soon these heavy trolley cars were passing over the bridge. One strict rule had been followed however; for a hundred years it was still adhered to. This was the speed of crossing the bridge. Quaintly worded warning signs were placed at each entrance, which stated, "One dollar penalty for paffing this bridge fafter than a walk by any perfon or perfons, riding or driving any horfe or carriage."<sup>8</sup> Later, trolley-cars must use at least 1½ minutes in cross-

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<sup>7</sup> *Diary*, Laura Cramer Ormsby from Katherine L. K. Ormsby.

<sup>8</sup> *Sign in Saratoga County Historical Society, Saratoga Spa.*

ing, while a double team with wagons and a load must walk their horses on the bridge.

We recall that the old bridge used to groan frightfully as heavy loads passed over it, but it was safe if the speed precautions were observed.

Once in the early 1890's a near hurricane tore the roof from the toll house but spared the quaint sign board which through the kindness of Mrs. Kathleen H. Knickerbacker has been placed by this author in the Saratoga County Historical Association, together with the test model of the 160-foot Union Bridge span which the Eddy Valve Company had built and donated to Waterford.

Time is running out on our old bridge. Motorman Walter Wright of the United Traction Company was aboard his trolley in the middle of the bridge on July 10, 1909.<sup>9</sup> He looked downward and saw a spiteful flame leaping from possible faulty insulation in the flooring. Soon the long-covered bridge, acting as a horizontal chimney, was blazing furiously.

A six-inch gas main on the bridge then pulled apart causing a new inferno. In just 35 minutes the destruction was done, with only the Lansingburg span remaining in place. The other spans fell into the Hudson River, one carrying six firemen to the water below. The men were unharmed and were rescued by boatmen. So our Union Bridge, then 105 years old and the best-preserved covered bridge in the U. S.<sup>10</sup> went down in a shower of flames.

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<sup>9</sup> *Troy Times*, 1909.

<sup>10</sup> *Capital Region of N. Y. State*, Kimball.



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE COLONIAL FERRIES, 1642 TO 1866

#### GREENBUSH

THESE WATER crossings used as fords, by boats, or by pedestrians upon the winter ice, were as old as the country. They were placed at strategic spots in the watercourses at "riffs" or shallows, opposite settlements, or finally, acting as crossings to continue the prevalent interior trail or travel routes.

The *Greenbush* ferry, said to go back to 1642, was one of the most prominent and frequently mentioned boat-ice ferries of the earliest days. It was part of a military route connecting New England with Albany. Almost all the New England troops passed over here on the way to northern battlefields, on boats, or upon the ice.

This ferry was a bit south of an island near the Greenbush shore. Crossing to Albany the troops went north over the lands of the Patroons of Watervliet and still farther north past "Stonehook"<sup>1</sup> (in 1955 Watervliet). At Stonehook was the Ashley-Vanderheyden Ferry which traveler Elkanah Watson says<sup>2</sup> was six miles above Albany. The militia here continued north over the Island route to Halfmoon. Should the rivers be in flood stage they could use the Loudon Ferry across the Mohawk above the Cohoes Falls. Since the publication of Stonehook, West Troy, or Watervliet's part in colonial wars seems to have been neglected, it should be added that through this place went almost every military expedition to the north, except those passing directly from Albany to Halfmoon in bateaux.

Waterfordians as late as 1850 used the Greenbush (Rensselaer) ferry. They went through Troy down to the ferry and crossed to Albany on the ice.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Map, the Manor of Rensselaerweck, 1767, Ino R. Bleeker.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Troy*, A. J. Weise, 1876, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Diary*, Laura Cramer Ormsby, Loan by Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Cramer Ormsby, Jr., Waterford.

This history states elsewhere that Albany was bridgeless from 1642 to 1866 and was served by its "Greenbush" ferry. This deserves an explanation. Albany was not bad off since many early highways came into Albany from the west and sloop trade connected it south-erly with New York and also with Troy and Waterford to the north. The two last places, together with Albany, were absolutely dependent on their sloop trade. At every time when Albany considered bridging the Hudson, both Waterford and Troy raised such an outcry that the move was soon abandoned. These latter places really supposed that a bridge (such as was built then) would strangle or prohibit the passage of their sloop ships, the life-blood of such river communities before the railways came.

In fact it was the death of an injunction and the coming of the railway era that occasioned Albany's first bridge over the Hudson in 1866.<sup>4</sup>

#### THE (TROY) ASHLEY-VANDERHEYDEN FERRY

This was the only ferry or public crossing to Troy in the year 1788. It was started by Captain Stephan Ashley and was to revert to Matthise Van Der Heyden in two years, who ran it thereafter. It must have been a substantial unit as it could transport both a wagon, man and horse as passengers.

Troy for a time, among travelers at least, bore the name of both these ferry operators, before it took its present title on Jan. 5, 1789.<sup>5</sup>

In the year 1819 a horse ferryboat invented by a Mr. Langdon of Whitehall was put into use on Vanderheyden's ferry. Beneath a platform two horses, each facing the opposite directions, walked squirrel-cage fashion, turning wheels which propelled the boat. The ferry is classed as a boat-ice ferry, connecting Troy and "Stonehook" (Watervliet).

#### THE MOHAWK FORD, WHICH NAMED WATERFORD

This description of ferry-fords was first intended to cover only those situated upon the Hudson River in the general area of Waterford. Since, however, the Mohawk ford was but a few hundred yards

<sup>4</sup> *Men, Cities and Transportation*, Kirkland, 1948, Vol. 1, pp. 138 and 368.

<sup>5</sup> *History of Troy*, A. J. Weise, 1876, p. 26.

distant from the Hudson, and considering that it came into existence at about the same time as the Greenbush ferry or even earlier, we give Waterford's a short description. Before the river dams came into existence, the Hudson and its tributary streams were quite shallow. This permitted easy crossing of all the streams of the Mohawk delta, especially by the colonial and Revolutionary armies. A man or officer on horseback had no difficulty crossing the islands and fords. General Johnson in 1755 even used scows to permit his troops to cross dryshod at the Water-Ford which at that time bore the name of Halfmoon. All the colonial and continental armies in general crossed the latter ford which resulted in the change of the village's name during the Revolution. This is classed as a ford crossing, connecting Waterford and Peebles Island.

#### HAMILTON—SCOTT FERRY (WATERFORD)

This boat ferry used principally during the turnpike and stage-coach days has gone out of the history known to Waterfordians. Hints of it were heard but these were confused. It was used until the building of the Union bridge in 1804 at old Ferry Street (Broad Street) near the "Sign of the Lion."<sup>6</sup> Here was the "Waterford & Stage House" successor to the Lion Tavern. This was classed as a boat and ice-ferry and connected Waterford and Lansingburg.

#### THE HALFMOON OR LANSING FERRY

In colonial days this was called the "usual place of crossing the Hudson river." This of course was for east going or New England travelers or those going to what later became Troy, and beyond to Greenbush, where the trail continued to New England.

It avoided the several branches of the Mohawk which were a full mile to the south. It was fine crossing at a narrow place, and was once guarded by the Halfmoon Fort in the 1690's. The Hudson's water was relatively shallow here, but crossings at flood season were "dangerous," reported a slave of early days.

The "ferry" had inns conveniently placed on both sides of the river and in 1804 the owners of the ferry landing sites on both sides of the Hudson were given free travel over the new Union Bridge.

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<sup>6</sup> *Waterford Gazette*, Jan. 31, 1804.



The farmers avoided one bridge fare by using the bridge when heavily loaded on the way to Troy, and when empty and light crossed free (we suppose) over Lansing's on the return trip. By April 16, 1805,<sup>7</sup> however, ferriage was being charged.

This river crossing figured prominently during the Knox 1775-1776 cavalcade of Ethan Allen cannon from Fort Ticonderoga. The artillery train tried to cross here but was turned back by thin ice. Knox, however, did cross in his light sleigh and so reported crossing the Hudson "four" times, which statement remains to puzzle historical writers, guided strictly by his diary. The "Ferry" was one mile north of Broad Street, Waterford.

### THE OVEROCKER FERRY

Little is known about this ford or ferry used in the 1600's, 1700's. It was located near the Peebles home about  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles from Broad St., Waterford. It was one of those ferries used to connect interior country trails. It crossed the Hudson near the Peebles place (now Behm's), on a road from the Mohawk Loudon Ferry. Being in the region of the Hudson "riffs" it may be assumed to have been of the fording type of river crossing.

### HUDSON RIVER FERRIES, WATERFORD TO SCHUYLERVILLE

These water crossings were situated near the earliest settlements, such as Stillwater, and connected with roads beyond the river. The description of these crossings was secured through the kind help of a family of "Friends" or Quakers, always esteemed as a staunch and quality people.<sup>8</sup> This family in turn obtained it in 1952 from ninety-year-old Oren B. Wilbur, the script being entitled "Ferries in Easton."

### THE VANDENBURG FERRY

This ferry at Stillwater, N. Y., is noted by a State marker, entitled "Ferry Lane." Here after the battle of Saratoga, Burgoyne's captive Brunswick troops were ferried across the Hudson on their way to Cambridge, Mass. Its other history is unknown. However, it points

<sup>7</sup> *Lansingburg Weekly Gazette*, April 16, 1805.

<sup>8</sup> Jacob and Anna B. Pratt, Stillwater or Schaghticoke, N. Y.

out that 1777 a trail went from here to New England, starting near the Hoosick River.

### VAN SCHAICK OR HOGAN FERRY

This ferry first operated by the Van Schaick family was about  $3\frac{3}{8}$  miles above Vandenburg's near Kidney Creek.

### SMITH, POWERS AND ENSIGN'S FERRY

A scant mile and one-half above the Van Schaick crossing was this ferry bearing the names of the successive owners. The farm upon which the ferry was situated once belonged to the Power's Bank family of Lansingburg.

### VAN BUREN—SEARLES FERRY

This ferry was on the George Pierce farm, located one mile from Smith's.

### SCHUYLERVILLE FERRY

This doubtless was used since the Revolution, its earlier name being<sup>9</sup> DeRidders. It was below an island, landing near Fish Creek. It was once horse operated, like Troy's Vanderheyden's. Its use continued until the bridge was built in 1837. At first it was only a ford, being available during low water. DeRidder started the ferry.

These upper Hudson ferries frequently used cables or ropes to guide the scows across the stream.

"Wally" C. Campbell used this cable method to carry produce over the Hudson from his fertile Island about two miles north of Lansingburg. Here four lives were lost on the evening of October 5, 1898, a passing steam yacht striking the upper cable and capsizing the craft.

Among those lost was the yacht's Captain, N. L. Weatherby of Troy. It happened that all the bodies were later recovered except that of Weatherby. As a result the surest way to break up a joyful boyhood swimming party was to have some poker-faced joker dive beneath the Hudsons' surface and come up with simulated haste declaring with all solemnity, "I just saw Weatherby." As we were

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<sup>9</sup> *The Story of Old Saratoga*, Brandow, 1900, p. 317.

always expecting to see the river give up the missing Captain, we then quit swimming.

Campbell used both a high and low cable to help pull his wagon, horses and produce across the water. The low cable was passed through rings on the barge, Campbell pulling on this cable to reach the island. The cable sank to the river bottom as the barge passed by. The upper cable was supposedly high enough to clear all river traffic. It ran on an angle downstream, the cable having sliding rings connected to the barge by vertical cables. Assisted by the river currents the laden barge would return to the shore, helped of course by the downstream angles of the cables.

A sudden rise of the Hudson lifted the yacht to the danger zone of the upper cable. This caught the smokestack of the passing yacht the "N. L. Weatherby," and turned it and its unlucky occupants over to the cold autumn darkness of the Hudson river.



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### THE WAR OF 1812

OUR NARROW winning of the Revolutionary War ended our colonial period and unfortunately left us almost as thirteen independent, quarreling republics. "Class" had been destroyed and all men were now equal but we as States were mentally inflated and almost resented the authority of Congress. We did not want to pay taxes and the left-over Revolutionary phrase, "not worth a Continental"—hinted of the value of our paper currency.

The older European powers seemed to despise our government and because of their edicts we could not trade with either the West Indies or France, while for a time the Barbary pirates ran wild over us.

Added to all these woes we had a western land controversy with Spain and here at home our New York and New Hampshire farmers fought over Vermont ground. As near as Walloomsac, N. Y. can still be seen a rather inflammatory marker entitled the "Declaration of Independence" for Vermont, where New York real estate "raiders" were "put on the run" by aggressive Vermonters.

We somehow drew together long enough for a Constitutional Convention which was preceded by the "Great Compromise." When the Constitution was ratified, the people generally seemed to go wild with joy. Even the Britisher Pitt declared that it would be "the admiration of all future ages."<sup>1</sup>

Then European wars engrossed our attention, while George Washington working hard to keep us free from foreign entanglements. Thomas Jefferson stretched the Constitution a bit and made the great Louisiana Purchase.

Next came a great tide of prosperity and our national debt was reduced by twenty-five million dollars.

Then the shadow of the War of 1812 gradually began to sur-

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<sup>1</sup> *The American People*, Muzzey.

round us. Napoleon sought to rule the world while our staunch ships and iron men had been increasing our export to 95 million a year. Britain in her war with France became careless and impressed our seamen for British service.

The war which resulted might easily have been averted, if events had been delayed for a few months.

When the War of 1812 came, Henry Clay thought that Canada would be an easy prize. It was a bit tougher than Clay supposed and somehow we "muffed" it.

Two bright battle features were Captain Perry's victory on Lake Erie, and Lieut. MacDonough's defeat of the British on Lake Champlain, but the burning of Washington will always chagrin us.

The passage of nearly a century and a half has made it difficult to provide the names of Waterford's participants in that war. A foremost history printed in 1878 says that from the year 1812 to 1830, there are no records of the military rolls.<sup>2</sup> However from one source we obtained the names of Samuel Stewart as General,

Danl. G. Garnsey *as Brig. Gen.*  
Henry Bailey, Jr., *Major*

Dr. John Sterns, *Surgeon*  
Francis Drake, *Lieut.*

General Stewart we understand, later declined his commission in this war. An old newspaper, name deleted as in most scrapbooks, tells that the war brought to Waterford the bustle of the camp and the tramp of armed men, adding too, that two regiments were "encamped upon the hill near Mrs. McIntire's."<sup>3</sup> It also said that among those doing duty with the militia" were Hezekiah Ketchum, Gradus Clute, Henry Ten Broeck, Joshua Manderville, and William Waldron.

Waterford's participation in the War of 1812 was greatly diminished in comparison with the Revolution. The line of attack upon Canada still passed through our village, but improvements in transportation routes since 1776 had changed the situation completely. No longer must troops ford the islands in the delta of the Mohawk. Troops and artillery now came through Troy and made a single river crossing over the 1804 Union bridge. Rather they hoped to,

<sup>2</sup> *History of Saratoga County*, 1878, Sylvester, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, April 16, 1886.

for in the case about to be cited, the bridge collector made for himself a place in this history.

Looking back upon it, the Union Bridge Act was indeed a remarkable edict, for New York State itself declared the "act" to carry a "construed benignity" which was still robust in 1909, when a new modern bridge was erected on aged cementless piers some 105 years old. No wonder then that its spruce beer-selling collector personnel was a pit puffed-up in that War of 1812. There was no middle ground. A bridge crosser was just a crosser be it the Army, the Navy or just a plain citizen. For citizens there was a fixed tariff but for soldiers with cannon there plainly was no difference to collector Sturgis. It was a case of pay up or stay on the Lansingburg side of the bridge—and forget the war in Canada.

The Lansingburg bridge end in those days, had not only a toll gate but a heavy traffic stop bar too. As a company of artillery approached the bridge with wheels and weapons, collector Sturgis closed the bar or gate and was safely fortified behind it until the Army should decide to pay up. His bill was three cents for each foot soldier and eighteen cents for each piece of artillery and wagon. The great U. S. Army was thus brought to a sudden halt and cooled its heels by orders of the man who kept the bridge.<sup>4</sup>

The officer in charge, after a long and useless parley, decided to move over the Hudson in true army style, giving his men orders to level the cannon at the bridge gates which retarded his progress.

Then and only then did the bridge collector realize that the United States was actually an irresistible force and greater even than both the president and directors of his benign Union Bridge Company.

Facing the unfriendly cannon, Sturgis surrendered, and minus his fares, probably for the first time, opened the bars permitting the artillery to go north in what later proved to be an elusive quest for victory.

Great events hinge on small things, and the War of 1812 with its almost colossal lack of transportation doubtless hastened the building of the 1825 Erie Canal. Our young country was fast

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<sup>4</sup> *News Scrap Book*, Mrs. (Brewster) Irving Wright.



outgrowing its common carriers. During the ill-fated invasion of Canada, it cost the Federal government \$3500.00 to haul a \$400.00 cannon from New York to Lake Erie.<sup>5</sup>

This distance, even if conditions were good, took almost a month using sailboat, carriage or wagon.

The War of 1812 was not a great success. Events at New Orleans proved however, that our citizen-soldiers had not lost their deadly accuracy with the rifle. General Morgan's men commenced this sharpshooting history at Saratoga in 1777 and the riflemen at King's Mountain duplicated it.

Andrew Jackson at the Plains of Chalmette knew his men. He ordered one of his artillery batteries to cease firing (to allow the smoke to clear), "to let someone shoot, that could shoot," meaning his riflemen.

The story of the Kentucky Rifle at the Plains of Chalmette (New Orleans) follows.<sup>6</sup> First, this battle on January 8, 1815, should not have been fought. The Ghent treaty of peace had been signed but the news had not reached America. The force attacking the Americans was commanded in person by Wellington's chief of staff and Lord Wellington said that "It was the best army ever seen; it could go anywhere and do anything." Further, General Pakenham's attacking force outnumbered the American defenders between two and three to one. But the British casualties according to their own figures<sup>7</sup> was incredible. Their loss was 3,326, the American defenders only 21. The British report continues, "Of the total number, about 3000 were struck by the small bullets the American sharpshooters used in their rifles; the rest by the missiles of artillery or by the ounce balls used in their regulation muskets." The Tennesseans used a rifle with a forty-inch barrel which weighed from 9½ to 12 pounds. These guns were of three calibers, i.e., .56-.45 and .38, and the sharpshooters cleaned their guns for every shot.

General Pakenham, the British Commander, went through the Peninsular wars with Wellington, and before he was felled with two bullets at once, was told by his spies that the Americans had a

5 *Oil Power*, Standard Oil Co., Vol. VI, No. 8, Sept. 1931, p. 117.

6 Harlow Pease, *American Rifleman*, December 1937.

7 History of Andrew Jackson, A. C. Buell (Bickers & Son, London, 1904).

weak spot in their line, undefended by bayonets. He directed his main attack against this point. By actual measurement after this battle, it was found that the nearest the British columns ever came to this weak place was ninety-nine yards before being stopped by American bullets.

At this battle the American riflemen had a superiority of fire, almost approaching a monopoly. The significance of this fight even reached Europe and Napoleon noted that smooth-bore muskets must be obsoleted in favor of rifled arms. Many of the British dead were shot through the head, some being shot twice apparently by different sharpshooters.

The range between the Americans and their victims was an interesting feature, being in excess of 200 yards although this distance was really an average. However, Britisher Brigade-Major Whitaker, attending the alignment of his men, was shot through the head at a distance of almost three hundred yards as he prepared to advance.<sup>8</sup>

It may interest some to learn that this shooting with flint locks and with cap and ball-rifles (the successor to the flint-locks) did not expire with the War of 1812. Each year thousands of men still meet and shoot annually, giving homage as they say to the "Gun that made and kept America Free." Nearby Fort Ticonderoga is a September Mecca for these muzzle-loading rifle-shooters and we note that the best prizes go to those men who shoot the flint-locks. It is quite a trick to carefully load such a rifle and gently press home the cloth-patched ball. Holding these heavy guns steady and on the target amid the spark of flint on steel together with flash of "powder in the pan" and finally the resultant explosion of the rifle charge, is not a task for a hasty or nervous man.

A study of the battle of Saratoga and the death of the gallant General Fraser brought us an opportunity to actually determine if that officer had been shot at a distance stated, which was 200 yards. This was, until a test, a mooted point among muzzle loading riflemen. Arriving at the September "shoot" we had Ticonderoga's men cut out a life-size replica of the late general Fraser. Two good "shots" from Connecticut were called and each being allowed one

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<sup>8</sup> Loaned by Muzzle Loading shooting expert Dewey Bryant and Mrs. Gladys Bryant of Gray, Maine.

shot, fired at the soldier figure. Both shots registered at 200 yards, one in the forehead and the second near the midriff. Still searching for the truth we asked each rifleman to "confess" and say where he had aimed to score the "hit." Winford Smith, the shooter hitting the forehead, had aimed one foot or more above the general's head; the second had aimed at the head and struck nearly the middle. From this we presume that in the olden days each man "knew" his rifle and also how high to hold it for long-distance targets.

Few good things emerge from the madness of war, but we can find a bit of solace in the fact that our national anthem *The Star Spangled Banner* was a contribution from the War of 1812. Francis Scott Key its author and a British captive, saw the British hurl tons of 220-pound shells for 25 hours at Fort McHenry, Maryland. The flag, grown to be prettiest of them all, that Key looked for so earnestly on September 13-14, 1814, is now in the Smithsonian Institute.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *World Almanac*, N. Y. World Telegram, 1955, p. 624.



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### OUR FIRST CHAMPLAIN CANAL

WHEN OUR COUNTRY was growing up, it had forty-four hundred miles of these artificial waterways. In 1926 only seven hundred miles remained.

The canals were important to the State and constituted the main business artery before the railroads came. Only the persistence of strong-minded men finally achieved the building of the Champlain and Erie canals, for canal projects had muddled along badly for years before. When these two were completed in 1825, the project was considered as being more daring than was the construction of the first railroad to the Pacific coast.

The settlement of Albany in 1624 by the Dutch and the early occupation of Canada by the French was destined to make the valleys of the Hudson and Lake Champlain one of the most important lines of communication on the continent. During the Revolution the British made obstinate efforts to take and hold this line and as early as 1757 two of their military men, Colonels Bradstreet and Pearson, sought especially near Waterford to remove the Hudson's impediments, the riffs or shoal water to facilitate transportation. This shoal water finally dimmed Henry Hudson's search for the northwest passage.

In 1792 New Yorkers chartered the Northern Inland Lock Navigation Company and spent \$100,000.00 in an ineffectual attempt to link Lake Champlain and the Hudson River, while in 1812 commissioners declared this project to be of national importance. Finally on April 17, 1816 a law was passed (Chap. 237) inaugurating the work and setting aside \$20,000.00 for the surveys for the Erie and Champlain canals. The proposition was well received since, for the Champlain project, millions of feet of boards and timber were being cut and were finding the way to market in difficult fashion from the region of Lake George and Luzerne, while the shores of

Lake Champlain were rich in lumber and iron with fine marble awaiting shipment from the quarries of Vermont.

The original canal was to be 40 feet wide at water surface and 28 feet at the bottom with a depth of four feet, although many changes were made later. The locks were to be 90 feet long and 15 feet wide. The tow-paths were to be 10 feet wide.

By 1818 twelve miles of the canal were completed and as early as 1822 water was in the canal from Lake Champlain to Waterford. Waterfordians, from printed reports, have always supposed that the first north going Champlain canal-boats passed through the sloop lock at Troy, ascended the Hudson River to Waterford and entered the "side cut" there by means of the northern branch of the Mohawk. Then climbing the three single locks at lower Fifth street in Waterford, began their northern journey. This popular belief was founded upon the ultimate 1825 completion of the canal, or the way later Waterfordians knew it. But not so at first, says Waterford's Irving Smith who in 1953 brought us the late Merwin Scott's version, which is that the first Champlain traffic came from the Cohoes junction of the Erie and entered Waterford through the Northside canal. After a long search Scott's version was found to be correct. New York State's hard to find account, is as follows. The canal from Lake Champlain to Waterford could be used in 1822. Its main line, from Whitehall to the Cohoes Erie junction was opened on September 10, 1823. The failure to come through Waterford's side cut from the start was caused by the turbulent waters of the Hudson river. It happens that the sloop lock at Troy was ready in 1822, but a roaring freshet tore away 120 feet of the accompanying Troy dam. This misfortune was similarly repeated in both 1823 and 1824, putting the canal commissioners in a deep quandry. But they wiggled out of it smartly. They drove a tight bargain with "certain responsible individuals" whereby this group would complete the Troy dam at their own expense and risk. Should, it withstand the "fall, winter and spring floods," and remain entire and undamaged, these contractors would receive \$25,750.00—otherwise, NOTHING!<sup>1</sup> The dam stood the test so well<sup>2</sup> that in 1825

<sup>1</sup> *New York Canals*, Whitford, Vol. 1, pp. 416-417.

<sup>2</sup> The dam remained intact for 68 years; Report of *New York State Eng. & Surveyor*, for 1893, p. 10.

the Commissioners accepted it. From that time on, the canal boats came up the Hudson and used Waterford's "side cut." The cut, in fact, was partly there from the first, being the northeast channel surrounding "Costers Island" the latter a reminder of our earliest days, coming as a dowry to Coster who married Van Schaick's daughter. This land, now entirely forgotten as an "island," became Dial City.

In securing this correct history of our local canal, as in several other instances, the author's task has been retarded by the time consuming job of unraveling the hazy stories coming down to us from old but truthful Waterfordians who have now passed beyond. In no case has that labor been in vain. The truth has been verified and probably because of its approaching disappearance in our national life, we regard truth as being an almost singular rarity of the 1950's.

The Waterford Weigh Lock at "Nealers," strange to add, was not built until 1862, and it has a place in canal history. The State for years had been defrauded of a large percentage of its tolls, by canal-boats quite deliberately leaving the Canal at Waterford and sailing down the Hudson. By this expedient they "skipped" Cohoes (and several locks) together with the weigh lock at West Troy where they were supposed to be weighed. Since this weigh lock at West Troy (Watervliet) was the only one on the entire Erie-Champlain systems, the new Waterford weigh lock, cutely placed geographically, proved to be of great benefit to the State.

In view of our observations of boyhood days, however, we fear that the lock-masters for pecuniary reasons, never learned to like the weigh-lock. Before the laden northbound canal-boats could get within a half-mile of the efficient weighing machine the lock-master or his deputy would hold up the craft (especially those carrying coal) and poke a specially-made long stick down to the boat's submerged bottom, at the same time peering at mystic lines on the stick. After this ruse a quantity of loose coal (presumably the alleged overweight quantity) would invariably be hauled from the "innards" of the boat and cast upon the side cut. Perhaps these men and the stick were the five percenters of the early 1900's for we were told that the pilfered coal eventually reached the lock master's cellar, or was sold by him.



In the early 1800's the Empire State (to be) was poverty-stricken. It may have been a hangover from the War of 1812. The result was that many and various were the schemes the State used to obtain construction funds to pay for the Champlain canal. Syracuse salt (soon to supply almost the entire nation) bore a duty. Canal packet travelers were taxed from 50 cents to one dollar, while lotteries were devised and taxes too were placed upon goods sold at auction. All these sources were in addition to the normal tolls which came from the boats which sailed the canal.

Convicts were taken from the State prisons to help build the canal and many truly ingenious devices were used to overcome the impediments of nature.

Giant pullers with gigantic wheels would uproot and carry from the scene the largest of trees, while another contrivance would slice away the heaviest roots beneath the ground. But, sad to say, most of the digging was by hand and shovel.

The canals really were the first American school of engineering. When the first canals were built, there was not a native-born engineer in America.<sup>3</sup>

Judge James Geddes (said to have had only a few hours previous experience) laid out our Champlain canal and may be called the Stepfather of it. Previously New York had tried in vain to import for this task a professional English engineer, William Weston.<sup>4</sup>

Judges and lawyers in those early days were also surveyors, as it was found useful in their work. Geddes had both skill and accuracy. In 1818 he ran a line almost a hundred miles long around Oneida lake. As the two ends of this circuit met and were checked, the error in levels was found less than one and one-half inches. Benjamin Wright, also a judge and surveyor, and Canvass White with Judge Geddes became the big three in canal building in a day when the country had no engineers.

The Champlain canal was started in 1817 and was completed on September 10, 1823 except for the Troy dam. Its cost up to the year 1832 was \$921,011. The length of the canal was 66 miles.

It brought much commerce from the Champlain valley, Ver-

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3 *Old Towpaths*, Harlow, 1926, p. 295.

4 *New York Canals*, Whitford, Vol. 1, p. 788.

mont and Canada. In its wake also came Waterford's thriving coo-  
perage business employing a large group of men divided into "slack"  
and "tight" coopers. The slack boys made flour barrels while the  
tight coopers made barrels to hold liquids. Red and white oak and  
also elm were used, and the wood was of the best. The wood blocks  
were first split into bolts and then into staves. The staves were sea-  
soned for months, probably bent, and finally bound into casks and  
barrels, held together by hickory hoops. Friedrichsohn and Sheridan  
in Dial City made barrels for pork.

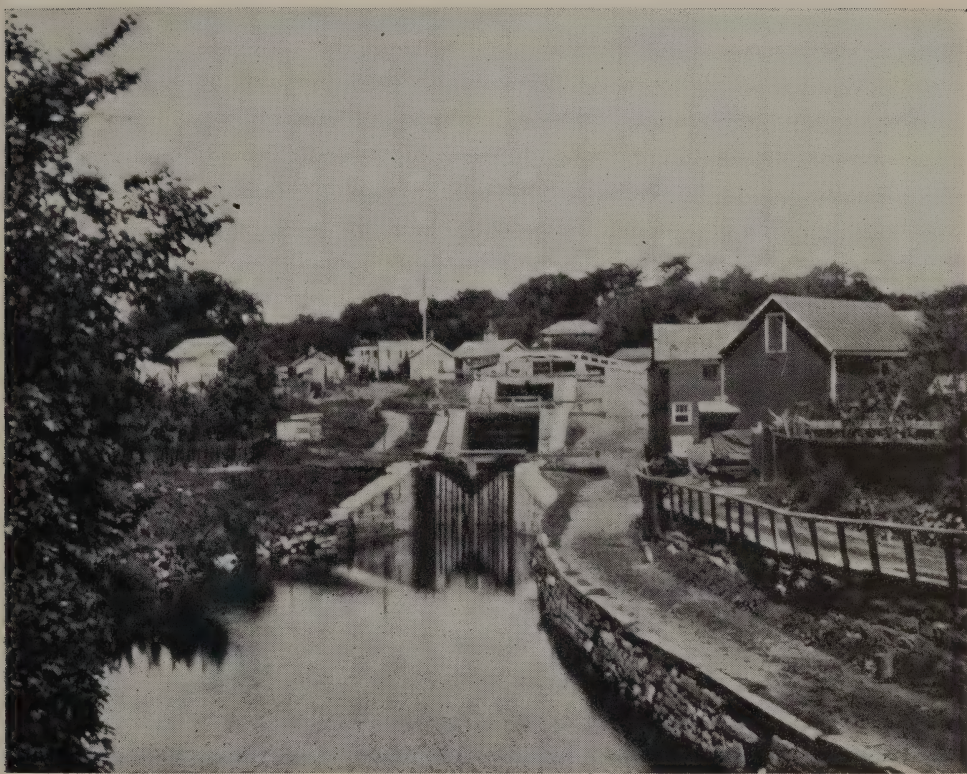
A Waterford paper of 1835 states that the first Champlain canal  
boat was built on Lake Ontario. It passed down the St. Lawrence  
river, through the Sorel river and Lake Champlain and so on down  
to Waterford.

Almost all the canal boats were neat and many had flowers in  
their cabin windows. Most had but one cabin and that at the rear  
of the boat. Some others had a cabin at both ends, the front cabin  
having stalls for the horses or mules which drew the boat. Most  
boat owners, however, hired the mules and their drivers from or-  
ganized concerns. These organizations had "line barns" where the  
mules were kept. The drivers were a woeful lot, mostly cripples.

Their employers fed them at stated places spaced ten or fifteen  
miles apart. These drivers were not trusted with money but were  
given meal tickets, their wages being paid in a lump sum at the  
season's end. The operators also furnished the mule drivers with  
rubberboots and raincoats for inclement weather. Many of these  
articles were missing at the season's end. They had been sold for  
drink, with their former owners then walking unprotected through  
the rain and heavy mud of the towpaths.

These poor fellows of low estate had a single measure by which  
to detect "dumbness" in any member of the human race not skilled  
in mule driving. They were greatly pleased to watch for it, hoping  
to see it operate from time to time.

In the course of the canal travel the mules and drivers had many  
stops while the boat went through the locks or the like. At this  
time the long tow-rope would lie seemingly harmless on the tow-  
path, from boat to mules, like a dormant snake. But should any pe-  
destrian come unwittingly along and choose to walk beside the



WATERFORD'S 1825 CHAMPLAIN CANAL LOCKS





canal side of that tow rope, he was all set to earn that unhappy "dumb" title ready to be bestowed upon him by the mule captains. All that was now needed to give joy to the driver was the command to start the mules and the boat.

The word comes and the driver says "gid-ap." The mules start forward at top mule pace. The angular tow-line, all this time secured vector fashion to the almost immovable object, the center of the heavily-laden canalboat, suddenly becomes taut and alive as the mules strain against it. Stiffening up, "snap the whip fashion," the heavy rope instantly hurls the misplaced walker into the yellow waters of the Champlain, enriched by the bodies of many deceased farm animals dumped into it. For the driver, all now is well. That night, after a nice lamb stew, and a pipe (to say the least) he could give an affirmative reply to words like those used by a modern newscaster, "Good night, and I hope that you have had a GOOD DAY."

De Witt Clinton is usually credited as being the warmest supporter of the canal project, but author Alvin Harlow splits the honor with several others.

One top canal genius was Canvass White, brother of Northside's Hugh White. Canvass went to England in 1817 and crammed for the Erie canal job, by tramping and observing beside two thousand miles of English tow paths. When back at home and working on Clinton's "big ditch," his greatest contribution was the method of holding the stone work together. He developed and patented a special cement from Chenango stone, which became the first hydraulic cement made in America. Previously it had been imported from England. To-day evidence of the fine stone construction of the old Champlain canal may be seen in the old locks to the right of Barge Canal Lock No. 2<sup>5</sup> at lower Fourth street in Waterford. Still acting as a Barge Canal overflow, these 100 or 130 year old outmoded locks belie their age.

Waterford's waterfront in the spring of 1895 looked like the metropolis that its mistaken founders dreamed it would become. Clinging to the "Battery" were hundreds of canal boats awaiting the start of canal navigation. Tied to each other, end on end, like a

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5 Said to have been rebuilt in 1854, in the form of combined locks.

swarm of bees, this great fleet filled the "side cut," bulged the Mohawk, and crowded the Hudson river. Each day came more boats from Troy, brought by the Thomas Miller and other tugs.

The boat owners were industrious and worked as they waited for the "opening day." The air was filled with the sound of hammer and caulking chisel, as they filled the cracks above the water line with oakum. Below the water line a leaky crack was another matter. This was a job for the drydock or another cute substitute that I saw a canaler use. He made friends with a horse. After that I saw him take a long pole to which was nailed a long box filled with old, and extremely well used hay interspersed with the horse's castoff oats. This "Chick Sales" mixture when pressed against the leaky portion of the boat would fill up the cracks (we suppose) as the hay and oats sought to go into the boat with the somewhat purer water. This combination should certainly have cured that canal boat of its leaks.

When the caulking was done, the owner, suspended by a rope and a long board above the generally flooding river, painted the boat's sides neatly, usually with white paint, not forgetting the very large lettering on the rear of the boat which bore the owners name and its home port.

Finally, the great opening day arrived and the boats began to move northward amid shouts and language not found in either Chaucer or Shakespeare frequently telling our young ears of a place where "the flame dieth not."

The first obstacle in the northward journey was the three locks at the lower end of Fifth street. Here the attendants would push, tug and finally swing open the first two heavy, hinged, wooden gates. Next the mule drivers amid a din of shouting and cursing, would urge their chargers to get going and put the heavily laden canal boats in motion. The poor mules as they pulled, would be jerked back and forth as the towing rope stretched and the boat slowly gained speed. When the craft was inside the lock the rear lock gates would be closed, and the lock men would turn several cranks and revolve the gears. These had chains and rods attached which opened gates and admitted water from above. The canal boat would then rise. When its height was equal to the next level,





WAITING FOR OPENING OF LOCKS, (1825 Champlain Canal)

Photo by Geo. Michon.



the forward gates would be pushed open. The mules now had gained a little breath and their drivers would shout them forward again in order to get the boat in position for the next higher level. These operations were repeated until the boat had risen from the Mohawk's level to the water in the canal at the top of Broad Street.

At Broad Street in the canal days, was a high canal bridge over which all must pass. It was a great impediment to ascending horse drawn vehicles. In June of 1889 it was removed and rebuilt, second hand fashion, across the canal at the foot of Fourth Street.<sup>6</sup> In the meanwhile the height of the hill at Broad street was being greatly reduced by pick and shovel in preparation for a new lift bridge. The reduction of the Broad Street grade was a large job and took four months.

The new lift bridge was placed across a barge and floated into place in a rapid manner. When completed and a canal tow approached, an operator would raise the bridge and then pedestrians must climb upstairs to get across the waterway, as the "Tow" passed beneath. The machinery was operated by water. When the town's reservoir was full there was 75 pounds pressure on the machinery that raised the bridge.

Two or more mules hauled the canal boats with seventy to ninety yards of heavy rope. Nothing furnished better tractive power than our long eared friends. Their modest speed of about one and one-half to four miles an hour was just right, for then the "swell" from the boats did not damage the clay lined ditch. Many curves were purposely put into the canal too, to help reduce the water currents.

The mule drivers would to-day excite pity. A large number were crippled and some, having a wooden leg, stumped along behind their patient but stubborn chargers, in all kinds of weather. People have said that these unfortunate men were aging Civil War veterans and some probably were. Although most canal drivers were regarded as "scrappy" these poor cripples were certainly not the "scum of the earth," a description of them found penciled by a Waterford woman on the page of a local history. Waterford's economy was favorably affected by the canal trade. It had great "line barns"<sup>7</sup> for the mules

<sup>6</sup> *The Waterford Advertiser*, June 28, 1889.

<sup>7</sup> One of the last of these (Robinson's), was burned November 4, 1956.



with eating places and forty or more saloons for the drivers. These saloons fervently sought the canaler's dollar and sold powerful liquid potations. G. S.'s place on Broad Street, for example, was noted for its "electric shock," a beer drink described as a mere "quart and a gill, for a nickel."

The casualties were seen lying in Gene's gutter, come Sunday morn. These were the nadir days of Waterford, and who can say that this evil was not the seed of "prohibition days"?

Without considering the attendant evils, the Champlain canal was a great financial success. In 1833, flour, beef, pork, butter and cheese were canal-carried for 5 mills per 1000 pounds per mile, while stoves and other metal castings cost from 10 to 14 mills for the same weight and distance. On the Erie Canal the comparative cost of moving a ton of freight, horse vs canal, fell from \$100.00 to \$5.00. Such an improvement in transportation by means of the Erie and Champlain waterways, brought us the title of the Empire State.

Engineering was young in the 1800's. The builders of the Champlain and Erie canal were not scientific. They knew by good judgment and intuition, almost, what other professional men were later to learn by calculation.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### EARLY TOWN LIFE

IN THE YEAR 1832 our town began to have growing pains. On February 4, a Town meeting was held and as a result we petitioned the Legislature to divide the "Shire" into two or three parts. In that year one could buy a whole barrel of new beef for \$5.37 and \$8.37. Butter was 13 cents per pound and cheese 5 cents. Pork was \$11.00 a barrel and wheat \$1.31 (perhaps, a bushel).

In 1833 Waterford had, 200 houses, 37 stores, and 40 small buildings used for offices or as shops for mechanics. We had 10 attorneys, 4 doctors, 12 grocery stores, 6 dry good stores, 4 shoe shops, 3 saddle shops and apothecaries, and 1 hardware shop which must have been Van Arnums, all for a population of 1473, counted in 1830. We wonder now about that wealth of service and stores, only partly enumerated. It meant that we did not have chain stores; that we bought almost entirely from our own merchants. Money too was scarcer in those days and no doubt many of the customers coming from the country, bartered eggs, butter, meat and the like for other food, as still is done in Adirondack villages. We are sure too, that our own folks did not run to Troy for any little thing they needed. Only until about 1870<sup>1</sup> did our people get that habit and then they went mostly for entertainment purposes.

We are quite proud to report that Broad Street was paved on June 2, 1834 but not quite so elated that they cut down the trees on that thoroughfare in August of 1900.<sup>2</sup> As stated by the Davy Tree people, trees are natural air conditioners. A large elm tree may evaporate as much as fifty barrels of water from its leaves during a hot summer day.<sup>3</sup> An actual test made at Willsboro, N. Y. in 1954 showed that the temperature among the trees was ten degrees cooler than in the village itself. On a treeless street the pavements

1 Troy N. Budget, April 3, 1874, Mrs. (Brewster) Irving Wright, *Scrapbook*.

2 *Diary*, Laura Cramer Ormsby, Waterford.

3 *Troy Times Record*, April 28, 1952.

and adjacent buildings constituted a gigantic hot oven. (Help the city's children, by Fresh-Air projects!)

Our people were frugal and lived simply. Before the Mors candle and factory came they saved fat and "drippings" and made their own soap and candles. We suppose they made their own cloth too. The only available reference is that in 1835, Waterford made 340 yards of fulled and 330 yards of flannel cloth.

Scattered throughout the village were many pumps where drinking water was obtained. The pumps were placed almost in the middle of intersecting streets, one being at Fourth and Middle Streets and others at South and Third, First and Middle Streets, etc.<sup>4</sup>

Real sanitation was sadly lacking and its absence cast doubt on even the best looking water coming from such sources. The high typhoid score of early days doubtless was due to the polluted underground veins which ran into the pump wells.

A lady born in this village who married into high Troy circles told the author that she could well remember her mother's wash days when the heavy soap vintage was just "dumped" into the gutter on unpaved upper First Street.

And there was also the lady, born nearly a century ago, who left me notes for this book. They reveal the uncomfortable and frank features of early living; very brief notes of detached places and pails. They reveal also the relative importance of the high board fences, so common then. These shielded the premises from prying eyes of those who lived in identical fashion. The fences were most useful too, against the nuisance of roaming cows and roving herds of pigs.

The latter animals scanned the streets and gutters for the garbage which contributed to the tasty bacon of the next winter. Not in vain then, is the warning about eating hastily cooked pork.

The pigs were a thorn in the flesh of our Doctor Timothy Upham. Besides his village practice, he was also acting health officer. After the Champlain canal was finished, and boats sailed even to the St. Lawrence, Canada was then stricken with the asiatic cholera. To protect the health of our village, that wise physician (scholarly

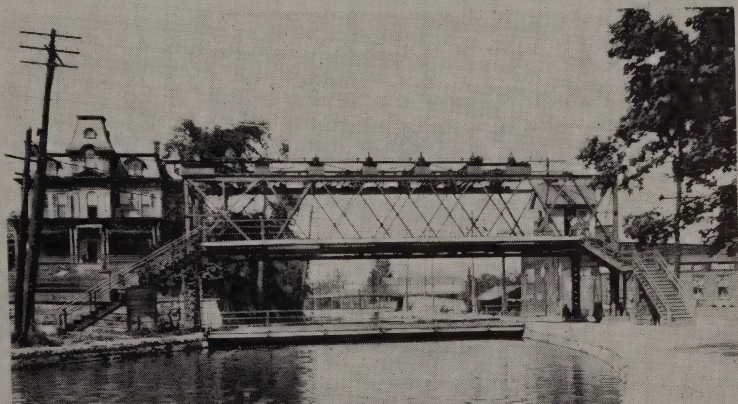
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<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Harry Grout, Dec. 5, 1947, North Troy, N. Y.





BROAD STREET IN EARLIER DAYS, LOOKING WEST FROM 1804 UNION BRIDGE.



CHAMPLAIN CANAL LIFT BRIDGE ERECTED ABOUT 1890

Michen Photo.





and polished) embargoed, and stopped on our northern town limits, some forty-one canal boats, a number coming from Canada. The doctor had determined to examine every last man aboard as a precaution against the plague. Only two canal boats were found to have suspect personnel.

But what did the exhausted doctor find at the west end of Middle Street after resuming his local practice? Nothing less than a wonderful (but filthy) pond of sticky mud encircling the drinking water pump! This was dear to the hearts of the pigs who were happily squealing and rooting in it as Dr. Upham came by. As he looked, the tired doctor's patience gave way, and he bounced to the office of the *Waterford Union* of June 30, 1832 and had printed, "About our pumps are filth and mud—where pigs wallow—near Mr. Hurd's place, water settles and become offensive; west of the Dutch Church (Third and Middle Sts.) is a low spot of ground where water stagnates." The physician had a case; why should he health inspect two score of canal boats beyond the village limits while the old folks at home would not keep their own steps clean?

We Waterfordians also had other peculiar ideas of sanitation as cited by the *Waterford Union* of August 9, 1832. "It shall be unlawful to throw offal or carcasses into the Hudson River or the north branch of the Mohawk—unless sunk by weights!" It is O. K. Boys! Toss that smelly dead pig into the waters of the Hudson, and pollute it—but don't let any of us see it or know it's there!

According to this author's experience, that was NOT the way to cultivate respect for sanitation. Coming down the shores of the old Champlain canal, (that unnatural mortuary for dead animals from Waterford to Whitehall) with a stick in hand, we noted upon its yellow waters, a nice swollen dead pig, red with sunburn and tight enough to play a tune upon, floating upon its waters. The tune idea being foremost, old dead piggy received a smart tattoo with the stick. To my great surprise (and with a bit of horror) a myriad of small bullheads and eels who were enjoying that overripe tid-bit dashed from beneath the enveloping pig's hide like a cloud. That was many, many years ago, and as far as I remember, I have never enjoyed eating either a bullhead or eel since.

But in spite of all Waterford's effort to the contrary, some



guardian angel of health seemed to hover o'er the village. Our Dr. Elijah Porter (one of the best) commenting on the health of the village on August 27, 1833 declared, "that the mortality was less than two (2) per cent annually." Compared with present mortality figures (for non-Metropolitan areas) and with the vast improvement in medicines and present medical skill, the 1833 report was not too bad. To-day (in places under 10,000 population) the rate per thousand is 11.3 or 1.13 per cent.<sup>5</sup>

So it appears that our earlier populace must have had good living habits and was pretty healthy after all, and no doubt "early to bed and early to rise" was a prime factor, since we know that the closing time for social events was home by nine o'clock.

Gas lights probably first brightened our village in 1860 and we had the first central water system in the winter of 1884-1885.

The milkman with his tall cans and his long ladle was then abroad bright and early in the land, and measured out as much milk as one wanted into a pail or pitcher, with tickets for payment. The spare milk was fed to the pigs, the farmer himself generally keeping one pig or hog for each four cows.

The early 1800's were duel days. Legal redress for so-called insults was not too strong, and libel too was almost unknown. If men felt insulted they just offered to fight and frequently killed their opponents.

In those days too, the people were entertained by traveling "Wax Works." We have an account in a Lansingburg paper of such a show visiting Troy, and showing as they said, thirty-three figures "large as life" including Presidents Washington, Adams and Jefferson with General Wolfe shown "in his expiring moments at Quebec."

We have many times encountered the name of General Stewart in Waterford affairs and note that the "Stuart Guards" were called up for the July 4, 1832 celebration (later canceled). General Stewart was a Militia Major General of the 15th Division New York Infantry.<sup>6</sup> He was appointed by the Governor of New York and confirmed by the N. Y. Senate. Had not the General resigned his

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<sup>5</sup> Letter, Department of Health, Dec. 19, 1953 (N. Y. S.).

<sup>6</sup> *Waterford Atlas*, Feb. 17, 1836.

commission, it is said that he would have outranked General Winfield Scott, later General of the Armies. This printed statement must be classed as pure Saratoga County homage. A cat may look at a king, but never is found a militia general even near the foot prints of a "general of the armies."

In the year 1823, the first Mohawk power dam from the Battery to Peebles Island was removed in anticipation of the opening of the first Champlain canal.

The five story brick building, probably becoming Hick's Cider Mill in later years, was at first McIntyres, or General Stewart's mill, although one account says that the Stewart flour mill was once on Peebles Island where the Stewarts owned land. This McIntyre or Stewart mill was run by power from the dam across the Mohawk. Later the plant was operated by a man named Grant and it finally became the first knitting mill in Waterford.<sup>7</sup>

On July 31, 1833 a big (\$50,000) fire occurred on King's Canal. One fire engine under construction in the Button works was saved, but two others ready to be shipped were destroyed. Aid by fire companies from Lansingburg helped save the other factories, but the Waterford Mfg. Co. also lost heavily.

The unique frankness of the Waterford news press is admired. Zenophon Haywood, Editor of the *Waterford Atlas*, belatedly admitted on February 12, 1834, that work on the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railway had been "under way for some time, without the Editor's knowledge." The road started in Waterford and was first used in 1835. The first depot was at the Eagle Tavern, later moving to Hudson Street, near No. 46 Second Street.

On June 5, 1833, the same paper exults on Waterford's future after reflecting on our "sloop navigation" and the fact that we now had 2000 "souls" and predicted that Waterford would become "a great and prosperous" city; at the same time, it called for a suitable building for our "high school."

#### CROW HILL (West Waterford)

This was the area beyond or west of the old Champlain Canal beginning about where new St. Mary's church stands, and going

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<sup>7</sup> *The Waterford Times*, Dec. 1, 1909.

north to the bridge over the railway track, then west to the West Waterford depot.

Only the older people remember the name, and it now brings smiles when it is mentioned.

All crow students know that these black birds homeward fly as eve arrives—and then they invariably sleep in tall pine trees, hence “Crow Hill.”

This brings our memory back to the very early days when this portion of our town, and beyond, was said to have been called the “Pine Plains.”

In the region close to where the Depot now stands was the “Common,” a place where the cattle of the community grazed.

Not far to the south of this was “Albert’s Gate” (Albert Vanderwerken’s land), beyond which were the wilds of the town, belonging partly to that gentleman.

Our people were then humble, and we have a printed record of a preacher hitching his cow to his house far down in the village, where bossy waited to be milked. Afterward he escorted her back to the Common.

“Crow Hill” is firmly fixed in local Spanish War history by—  
“Several youths of Crow Hill, West Waterford, purchased a flag and had a flag raising with \$7.00 or \$8.00 solicited from their friends. The ceremony took place before a large audience with Owen Coyle making the speech and Father O’Donnel of St. Mary’s assisting in the ceremonies.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Troy Times*, May 4 and 7, 1898.



## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### WATERFORD'S RAILROADS

(Rensselaer & Saratoga R.R.)

(The Delaware & Hudson)

ONLY THOSE early sufferers who had first walked, next bumped about in the stagecoaches, or traveled at snail's pace in the hot canal packets, could fully appreciate our first railways. But, to the contrary, frightened horses, cattle and geese took off for quieter regions as the engine and cars invaded our rural countryside.

The four ton locomotive was noisy and burned wood. It belched sparks far and wide as it hurtled forward to the Borrough (Mechanicville) at 24 miles per hour on its first trial run on August 15, 1835. And the (remodeled turnpike) coaches were things of beauty to Freeman Hunt<sup>1</sup> who said they were "Moving Art-Galleries," the panels of each having from six to ten copies of famous subjects such as Stuart's "George Washington" and "Napoleon Crossing the Alps." These fine coaches were made by Gilbert, Veazie and Eaton of Troy, while the two locomotives were named the "Erie" and the "Champlain." This last canal reference was proper since there was at Mechanicville a railway station where the railway crossed the Champlain canal. Here connections were made with canal "steam"<sup>2</sup> packets and horse drawn canal boats.

This railway was the Rensselaer & Saratoga Railroad, incorporated April 14, 1832. Its official opening is given as October 6, 1835 for only at that date was the railroad bridge across the Hudson from Green Island to Troy completed. Weiss<sup>3</sup> says the engine was detached at Green Island and that horses drew the trains across the river bridge and down River Street to the Troy House.

On May 1, 1871, the above road was leased in perpetuity to the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, the latter springing from

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<sup>1</sup> *Article*, Jessie F. Wheeler, Aug. 16, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> The first notation of a steam packet.

<sup>3</sup> *History of Troy*, 1876, p. 178.

a humble Canal Company founded in 1823 and which was finally merged into the Delaware & Hudson Railroad Corporation on Jan. 1, 1944.

It will be noted that the August 15, 1835 exploit was only a trial run. The official run to Ballston Spa took place three days later. The latter was a great event with 400 passengers aboard together with two companies of Militia and notables from Waterford, Troy and Albany.<sup>4</sup> At Ballston the train was greeted amidst the roar of cannon and the pealings of bells. Some 6 7/10 miles from Waterford on the King's or Great Road lived Scotsman John Stracham a celebrity nearly a century and a quarter ago, at the Leland place. All the great men of early days visited him and in his later days he was taken by our John K. Porter to meet Daniel Webster at Saratoga, in September of 1843. Stracham, while he owned two miles of forest land along the desired route, welcomed the railway. Visited by our John Knickerbacker and John Cramer, railway directors, in regard thereto, he sold the right of way and 11 acres of land for only \$580.00. This John Stracham tells us that on the first return trip from Ballston, a cow, at the wrong moment, tried to cross the track and managed to toss from the "rails" (4 inch scantling, to which was nailed  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. x 2 in. iron) the six cars and all the celebrants. He says, "As I write, the road is thronged with horse and foot wending their way to Waterford, Troy and Albany, as best they may." So ended the first run to Ballston. The best time then made to Ballston (20 miles) was 50 minutes and it was called a "flying trip."

Old Waterford residents, somewhat confused as to the reasons, have stated that the Rensselaer and Saratoga used to start at the Eagle Hotel of the Revolution, the first Waterford depot place, and not in Troy. Jessie F. Wheeler's Railroad Centennial writing proves this was correct when she writes that only that part of the road from Ballston to Troy was ready for the opening and that guests for the first ride were conveyed to Waterford over the "fine Waterford (Union) bridge," to embark in the train at Waterford.

All accounts agree that the railway was originally planned to

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<sup>4</sup> *Ballston Spa Gazette*, Aug. 1835.

cross the Hudson River at the Waterford Union Bridge site, coming from Troy through Lansingburg.

Mrs. Wheeler, an authority, cites that Lansingburg would not permit their charming town to be so invaded by steam locomotives, and that point is well taken. Several other authorities state, however, that the Union bridge's fee for the railroad crossing here was so high that four other complete bridges (a total of 2620 feet) were built instead, three being used over the delta of the Mohawk alone.

The latter were always in trouble, either due to fire or ice, and some were replaced a number of times. In March 1868 one bridge went out with the ice and in the 1890's another was burned. Still this inept island route was mentioned in 1954 as a super highway course.

As time advances this short Troy-Waterford island rail connection is giving way to the heavier business on the upper railroad which passes through West Waterford.

Before closing the narrative of this, the third railroad in New York State, we cite two details about it, now probably forgotten by Waterfordians.

The upper end of our Third street was known as the "crossing." Here two incidents occurred. Early in the 1900's the new electric Hudson Valley Railway system desired to cross the D. & H. railway tracks at this point. The latter concern opposed the crossing and planted a heavy locomotive on their right of way at the exact spot required by the Hudson Valley Co. To further halt the electric invasion a horde of men armed with pick-axe handles hovered about to stop the proposed crossing. This brings to mind the war-like era of the railways described in the *Robber Barons*.<sup>5</sup>

Some amicable agreement was finally reached and an elaborate system of derailment was erected there, with a watch tower and a man on guard at all hours to observe the crossing. Should a collision appear imminent between approaching trolley cars and the steam railway units, the latter could be thrown from their tracks by the tower operator in time to avoid a royal smash up.

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<sup>5</sup> *Robber Barons*, Matthew Josephson, 1934.



The great test day arrived early in the evening of September 20, 1902.<sup>6</sup>

In progress was an electric railroad strike which developed into such violence that the National Guard troops were riding in force on the Hudson Valley electrics. At just the wrong moment a heavy southbound electric car filled with soldiers prepared to make the "crossing" just as a heavy freight, seemingly unaware of the situation, was advancing north at high speed to do the same thing. Tower operator William Rice had but a moment to make a decision and he promptly tossed the whole freight train from the D. & H. rails and no doubt prevented a heavy loss of life among the guard troops. The steam railroad chaos was tremendous. It all happened so suddenly that the steam engineer had no warning and his derailed locomotive with wheels spinning half-buried itself in earth. The freight cars, some empty and close to the locomotive, were tossed about like match sticks.

#### THE ALBANY NORTHERN OR ALBANY AND VERMONT RAILROAD

(The Delaware & Hudson)

This is Waterford's present double-tracked main line and runs from Albany through West Waterford to the Waterford Junction, being only twelve miles in length. It was incorporated on February 20, 1851 as the Albany Northern and being constructed during 1851-1852 then ran from Albany to Eagle Bridge, N. Y. In 1853 it crossed the Hudson River near the old Red, White and Blue House a full three miles from Waterford. It is now the Albany and Vermont Railroad incorporated on October 6, 1899. The Albany & Vermont was leased to the Rensselaer & Saratoga R.R. on June 12, 1860, which in turn leased it to the present Delaware and Hudson Corporation on May 11, 1871.

The Albany & Vermont Railroad still exists as a separate entity. Though seemingly a part of the Delaware & Hudson Co. (which owns 37 per cent of its stock) it has paid separate stock dividends since 1860. This financial separation from the D. & H. puzzles non-

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<sup>6</sup> Report of New York State Adjutant General for 1902, Vol. 1, Appendix "CC."

financiers but perhaps the answer may be obtained in Wall Street. It is only 12 miles long and extends from Albany to the Waterford "junction."

The original cost was said to be \$2,600,000.00 for the 32 miles of its original length. It once ran from Albany, passing through West Troy, Cohoes, Waterford, the Junction, Schaghticoke, Pittstown, Johnsonville, Buskirk and terminating at Eagle Bridge in Washington County. The road was originally built to give Albany rail connections with the north but it did not pay expenses until the merger with the Rensselaer & Saratoga and the Delaware & Hudson. The iron used in its construction was purchased in England and paid for in stock. The original cost of over two and one-half million dollars was partly due to the seventeen bridges between Albany and Eagle bridge, four being substantial, one crossing the Mohawk, one the Hudson and two over the Hoosick River. Besides, the engineers had many embankments to build and culverts over deep cuts to fill. The long Waterford embankment from the old Champlain Canal (upper Fourth Street) to the Junction was a distinct benefit to Waterford. It entirely removed the town's northern swamp area run-offs, which once ran through our village.

The road's probable weakest item was the 1170 foot, (8) 147 ft. wooden spans on stone piers, across the Hudson River near the Red, White and Blue House. The trusses were only 20 feet high and the bridge had no bracing between the bottom chords. As a result the trusses "kinked." To add insult to injury, the bridge was struck by lightning in 1859, shattering the braces.

Other misfortune followed.<sup>7</sup> A Schaghticoke bridge over the Hoosick collapsed during the summer of 1858 dropping the train and passengers into the river below. A number were killed and hurt. One of the injured was a New York lawyer, who tried to have Supt. White indicted for manslaughter.

In 1860<sup>8</sup> rumors flew in Waterford that the Rensselaer & Saratoga line was about to buy the Albany & Northern & Vermont Railroad. The plans were for the first-named company then to run their trains to Albany. The Hudson's Albany & Vermont bridge above

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<sup>7</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, December 31, 1859.

<sup>8</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, March 24, 1860.

Waterford was to be planned for the farmers' use. The Waterford paper expressed sorrow (which still continues) about pedestrians climbing the "hill" from the village to the depot of the Albany-Northern road. The actual sale was concluded for \$307,000.00. The first advantage of the sale was that Albany passengers going north to Saratoga and beyond, did not now have to change cars at the Waterford junction, where the Albany Northern joined the line of the Rensselaer & Saratoga R.R.

When the original Albany & Vermont directors sought to take up their unused rails from the former North-Waterford Hudson River bridge and beyond to Eagle Bridge, legal trouble began. One Judge Peckham granted an injunction against taking up the "\$50,000.00 worth of iron," but with a disregard of the law then present in certain circles the rails and iron were quietly removed within a year and the creditors in England (who at first had only received railway stock in return) finally received real payment for the railroad iron.<sup>9</sup>

The abandoned Hudson river bridge was not planked as first planned and the abutments and the railroad approach to it remained for years afterward for the oldtimers of Waterford to point out to us, where the old bridge had stood.

Concerning the 1955 line through West Waterford to Montreal its planners were wise. It largely eliminates the Peebles Island, Green Island route to Waterford with its three river bridges and the roadbed, consisting of only a narrow elevated strip on Van Schaick Island.

Here in times of high water the north-east flowing Mohawk, and the south-going Hudson are only separated from each other by this thin strip of railroad land. The condition has become aggravated by top soil-selling merchants who have "bulldozed" away the normal west bank of the Hudson. The land surface, thus lowered, permits the Hudson's water to almost join that of the Mohawk.

This land thus despoiled by the bulldozers was once the very fertile Linehan farm and the still earlier 1600 camping-ground of the Mahican Indians.

And now in 1955 this narrow railroad strip has actually been considered by highway engineers as a super-highway route.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Copy of April 14, 1860.



In closing this chapter on the progressive means of travel, we are reminded of the saying that "those who lived between 1805 and 1845, and saw the coming of the sloop, the stagecoach, the canals and their locks, together with the railroad trains, had witnessed a mighty era!

Nothing like it had been seen before, and they were as remarkable to the people of those days as the telephone, the airplane and the radio are to us.<sup>10</sup>

The tempo is changing fast today, bringing more scientific surprises in radar, the ultra-fast jet planes and the remarkable way of shortening human existence by the devilish means of atomic destruction.

### WATERFORD, BEFORE CANALS AND RAILROADS

How our village and town looked, unscarred by the dams, canals and railroads of civilization, is not hard to describe. Early maps give the prime essentials of this scene while the writings of scientific men help too. The final touch is found in old newspapers and photos fringing on antiquity.

The main physical features, the high and low terraces, were glacier-made. The Hudson and Mohawk rivers and the temporary Lake Albany were the active agents in these formations. The town-village terraces were blended together by slopes, some quite severe. In one instance the connecting slope was almost as high as the top land of St. Mary's parsonage. This condition, before the hill was cut down, made upper Broad Street almost impassable for heavy wagons in early days. West-going loads preferred the Lansingburg Cohoes bridge route instead of coming through Waterford. West Waterford, it will be noted, has less elevation than Prospect Hill. Its height, doubtless once the same, was reduced by the glacial overflow from the Mohawk river which extended also over all the North-side section.<sup>11</sup>

Between the high terrace (Prospect Hill) and the lower terrace (Lower Broad Street) were swampy drain offs. One ran north-

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<sup>10</sup> *Capital Region of New York State* (Kimball).

<sup>11</sup> *Glacial Geology, Mohawk Quadrangle*, J. H. Stoller, 1918, p. 9.

south through the village to drain into the Mohawk near lower Third Street.

The Hudson's shores, then untouched by floods or erosion, were so gently inclined to the waters edge, that the advent of the 1823 Troy dam robbed our east border of considerable land at Water Street. This was east of First Street. The Champlain canal of 1823 cut curving paths through our community. One branch came from the Northside and joined the main entrance at the "side cut," and the locks, one block south of Broad Street. Here the canal passed under the old departed "Lift" bridge and went north to Mechanicville.

The canal's builders were smart. They cut the ditch close to the edge or side of the upper terrace, near Prospect Hill. They knew water would come from this high ground and run into the canal. What water happened in turn to seep from the canal's east bank would drain into the swamps which were water-filled anyway.

The Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad came in 1835 and did not cause much change excepting a slight raise or embankment at lower Second Street.

The Albany and Vermont Railroad coming in 1851-52, apart from completely cutting across the old "Ballston" road to "Crow" or Prospect Hill, was an advantage. Its high, curving, railroad embankment near the upper end of Fourth Street, completely sealed the swamp's run-off. By putting in a culvert and a creek, not far above, the railroad men shunted the water from "Kerwin's" swamp direct to the Hudson river instead of having it invade Fourth Street and the Village.

West of West Waterford was a beautiful valley in which nestled a stream draining over one square mile. It was fed by springs and the swamps that the Dutch called "Croepellbosses." In this valley was the fertile and pleasant Wolcott farm. The stream curved and widened into a pond near the Rural Cemetery as it passed the Rev. Stephen Bush grounds, a green haven of nice grass, walnut trees, cows and mushrooms. It passed under Saratoga Ave. into part of the "Cemetery" pond and emptied into the old Champlain canal. Before canal time a creek carried it to the Mohawk.

The new Barge Canal, coming in 1902, destroyed some old homes and the Rev. Bush estate. The canal ran straight up the valley of the Wolcotts, splitting their farm in two. Old residents, wishing to be helpful, warned the canal contractors of the potentials of the Wolcott valley stream. The newcomers jested and said they could "Drink all the water coming down the creek." Perhaps it was but a coincidence, but we have a photo showing their giant steam-shovels almost submerged as, in the following spring, the rain-swollen creek deluged the incomplete ditch and carried away the contractor's new wood.

The new Barge Canal gave us still another bridge and left old "Dial" City marooned and in a pocket. This is belated vengeance for an old resident born nearly a century ago. We have her notes saying that most of the roving cattle and pigs, the perpetual annoyance of neat Waterford people, came from this Dial City.

Transportation has been called "king" and these four shipping units namely two railroads and two canals coming to us in less than a century, have changed our place from its former title "The dressy suburb of Troy—full of people of means and refinement"<sup>12</sup> to a community of homes, and manufacturers, a place where life has been improved by these modern facilities.

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<sup>12</sup> Description, by an early Trojan, Dwight Edwards Marvin, father of Editor Dwight Marvin.



## CHAPTER TWENTY

### ECONOMIC GROWTH OF OUR COMMUNITY (Manufacturies)

WATERFORD began to surge forward with both rural and industrial life between the last years of 1790 and the first half of the nineteenth century. Few localities offered more promise of an extraordinary future than did our place.

It was excellently situated at the junction of two rivers, one the great Hudson which later had deeper water for sea going vessels not more than a dozen miles away. Besides, both these streams the Hudson and Mohawk, soon had fine bridges which connected our community with other places.

Waterford was really alive. So anxious was it for growth that it spent both personal and village funds with a neighboring village to dredge the Hudson to speed its sloop trade.

Supposedly at the head of Hudson navigation, it once attracted and shipped by sloop, wheat and produce brought great distances from the interior.

Time brought the Champlain canal and the third railroad in the State. While these important arteries helped make us the "Empire" state, they brought Waterford not growth but severe competition, with a lessening of our business.

Thus, while our place had all the necessities for economic growth, namely, transportation, trade and a ready communication with other places, the fulfillment of our early hopes was not realized.

So, as we write of the astonishing number of our early products, we must admit that the story becomes a sort of obituary.

Waterford's flour mills, together with those of New England, finally gave way to those using the cheaper grain of the West. The knit goods mills which took their places followed their raw materials to the source and these too became but a memory.

The pioneers, selecting our village site on the Hudson as the future site of a great city, missed the location by a mere four miles. Events proved that we were not at the head of navigation, but that Troy was.

Probably between the years of 1800 and 1814 a decisive factor in Waterford's future occurred.

At this time the products of our farms in dollar value was not far behind its manufactured articles, the value of both aggregating nearly three-quarters of a million dollars. The manufacturers comprised a variety of men who were the more vigorous leaders, while the owners of our great landed estates were rich and without vision. It thus happened that when the great opportunity arrived it was missed by our land owners. Two great manufacturing concerns wished to buy land and use Mohawk waterpower at the Cohoes Falls, on Waterford's side of the river but were refused entry by the landed gentry. Cohoes sold the required land and as a result profited instead of Waterford. A fact, not to be ignored was that the Waterford owner of the desired large plot of land had no children—and no vision.

While Waterford did not "die on the vine" as a result, its future was definitely compromised.

### WATERFORD INDUSTRIES, OLD AND NEW

Waterford's past industries have been legion. They progressively changed, as did our State, from furs to potash, to lumber, flour and meat.<sup>1</sup> Later as waterpower came, our place manufactured the many items for which our growing land was hungry.

At first the Dutch settlers were content with the products of the field and forest. Then in 1783 came the "Yankee" invasion, a title fitting the New Englanders who came here in great numbers. In 1800 it was estimated that up to 67 per cent of the local newcomers came here from the east.

These could be regarded as younger people. From 1800 to 1810 over one-half of New York State's population was under sixteen years of age, while 11 per cent was 45 years of age and upward.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *History of American Life*, Schlisinger & Fox.

<sup>2</sup> *Landlords and Farmers, 1790-1850*, David M. Ellis, 1940, p. 20.

These were the folk who in the 1800's commenced in Waterford, the manufacture of an impressive variety of articles. A glance at our early directory gives a revealing suggestion. Many of those who rose to manufacturing fame and wealth, started in some humble capacity. They first had been machinists, clerks and ordinary people. A number "boarded out," and climbed upward by hard work and industry. Here was America in action and its significant privileges were to add to our country's fame.

A photo study of a factory group of 1884, shows the presence of an apparent unity or teamwork. Bosses and workers appear as a single unit. Only "that look" or a different kind of hat distinguished the bosses. Strange it is, that after nearly three-quarters of a century of intermittent labor-capital strife, this great element of success, unity, is still waiting to enter America's manufacturing fields. As early as 1835 a Waterford editor, doubtless noting this labor amity among our local producers, printed a reflective query as to why our town "did not become a city." Probably he was pondering the lecture of our Dr. Elijah Porter before Waterford's Lyceum on Aug. 27, 1833. The speaker declared our exports totaled \$746,000.00 with a population of only 1473 in the year 1830.

The single and principal impediment which kept Waterford from rising to greatness was a sharp division existing between the landowners, who exported products valued at \$300,000.00 in 1830, and the hustling manufacturers whose exports totaled \$446,000.00. The older residents of Waterford with few exceptions were a class whose main wealth consisted of land and cattle. Lands were their homesteads and to part with any portion of their estate was a sacrilege. Southwest of Waterford and west of the "Northside" is a plateau covering about 900 acres. This is adjacent to the famous Cohoes Falls, which then, with its hourly flow of more than 150 million gallons of water, was a prime source of power. According to old newspapers, Waterford had two distinct opportunities to cash in on this white coal, but the landowners refused to sell the adjacent land. First to apply was the great Harmony Mills.

Next, Watervliet Arsenal first chose as a preferred site this same Northside land. The United States authorities were doubtless attracted by the waterpower, which was a ruling passion in the



1880's. In fact when the Arsenal finally located at Gibbonsville or West Troy, the plant was largely operated by water from the Erie Canal. But Waterford lost these great opportunities. The D—s family refused to sell the land that both the Harmony Company and the Arsenal desired.<sup>3</sup> The owners said, concerning the Arsenal, that "the soldiers would rob their hen roosts." So if the reports in early papers are true, Waterford, lacking a still greater unity, narrowly missed being a city while youthful Cohoesville, as Cohoes was first called, won the prize.

### THE FIRST SAWMILL

Waterford's first industries, with the exception of the paper mills, are named in the order of their arrival here. The first would be, of course, a sawmill built in 1784, for sawmills, together with a church, school and store, were then the focus of all rural hamlets. The sawmill was run on a small creek by John Land, with location unknown, but possibly on the site of the Burton Saw Mill. Later another sawmill was powered by Mohawk water, a dam running across the northern branch to Peebles Island.

### THE FLOUR MILLS

The principal industry from 1834 until 1871 was flour making, although Mr. J. Himes had a separate dam and first ground flour about 1812. He used Mohawk waterpower. His flour was well known throughout New England.

Numerous other flour-mills flourished throughout our village. Waterford also became the shipping point for all Saratoga County grain and also of the country far to the north of that county.

The grain was brought here in the fall and winter and stored in houses and warehouses on Front and First Streets. Sleighs and wagons were used to carry the grain and it is said that great caravans extended for a mile up the Hudson River road. These caravans came to Waterford from as far north as Lake George and Lake Champlain.<sup>3a</sup> The power to grind the grain came from Hime's dam, King's power canal and from Mohawk water. General Stewart milled

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<sup>3</sup> *Newspaper Scrap Book*, Mrs. (Brewster) Irving Wright, Waterford, N. Y.  
<sup>3a</sup> *Saratogian*, Centennial Edition, Oct. 26, 1954.

flour on Peebles Island,<sup>6</sup> his power taken from a dam across the Mohawk to the island. This dam was destroyed prior to 1825<sup>4</sup> when the Troy State Dam was finished. Equivalent power was then given by the State from the Champlain canal. Enos and Gibson milled flour at a mill some 600-800 feet north of Waterford School No. 1, from this Champlain canal-power.

Other flour mills were operated by T. M. Vail & Sons—Shepard & Co., together with Eddy and Ludlow. Another flourishing mill was on King's power-canal and was operated by John House and John Fulton. Many of these mills produced fine wheat and rye flours having special titles which spread Waterford's name throughout the country. Three of the factories had a milling capacity of 40,000 bushels each, and in the year 1833 they milled 75,000 bushels of grain.

We should also mention the Shawtemack Flour Mills of the Hon. Hugh White on the site later to be known as the Munsion Knitting Mill.

In 1859 the four firms of J. B. Enos-Eddy, Stewart & Ludlow, House & Fulton and A. D. Shepard, reported that their flour mills had produced 145,000 barrels of flour from 617,000 bushels of wheat.<sup>5</sup>

### KING'S HYDRAULIC POWER CANAL

The greatest single contribution to Waterford's industries was King's waterpower canal built about 1828 by John Fuller King, and the people of the village were justly proud of it. The editor of the *Waterford Union* in August 1832 paid it this fitting tribute saying, "It is an inherent principal in human nature to seek happiness by a diminution of corporeal labor." He then tells about the canal and the number employed by it.

King performed a real engineering feat for those days by running two dams across the north or fourth branch of the Mohawk, the largest dam to Peebles Island. After holding back this water King released it through a canal running parallel with the river fully one-half mile long. The water fell back into the Mohawk with

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<sup>4</sup> *New York Canals*, Whitford, Vol. 1, pp. 416-417.

<sup>5</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, Jan. 28, 1860.

<sup>6</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, May 14, 1886.

a drop of sixteen feet. Along this 53 foot wide canal were built dozens of factories which turned out an almost unprecedented variety of commodities, many of which gained nationwide prominence.

King and his group had vision worthy of to-day. They advertised their surplus power on New York's Wall Street, as equalling "thirty run of mill stone."

In 1830 the latter was a symbol of power required to grind wheat or grain. Such milling-stones were made of Esopus stone, buhr stones (France), or native granite. Some were seven feet in diameter. These were used in pairs, one atop the other. The run of 30 millstones meant 60 stone discs. The writer measured one of these old mill-stones which was 58 inch in diameter and 10 inches thick. Across its face were cut intricate V grooves to help grip the moving grain as the stones revolved.

Each stone disc had either a square hole at its center or a round hole with two driver slots. The revolving power shafts on King's canal ran vertically and turned the stones in opposite directions.<sup>7</sup>

The lower disc was called the "bedder." How much horsepower was used to revolve such stones could not be found.

Milling as done in the 1800's was centuries old. Frequently all the machinery was made of wood. Besides the wheat ground for bread, corn and oats were also ground for cattle food. The miller must accurately gage the speed of the grinding-stones and the amount of grain fed between them. The grain fed to the stones must never stop; if it did the stones would rub together with disastrous results. The one great fault or objection to milling was keeping the stones sharp. When the stone surface above the V-shaped grooves become worn down at the top, they must be "trued" or "dressed" and "picked."<sup>8</sup> This was a tiresome process requiring several days and nights of work. It was done with a hammer-shaped instrument having a sharp and hardened chisel face. Small particles of hardened steel flew from the tool and frequently went beneath the skin on the miller's hand. These black specks stayed there for life.

<sup>7</sup> Letter, General Baking Co., New York, Nov. 24, 1952.

<sup>8</sup> *Millers for Five Generations*, E. T. and H. K. Ide, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 1953, page 7.



In 1866 "white" flour began to come from the west and eastern millers had to learn how to make it or go out of business. Every farmer's wife wanted the new flour.

To complete the story on milling it should be said that grinding grain with millstones lasted until the 1890's. Then the equipment was changed from stones to roller and attrition mills.

We return now to King's power-canal. The power the King's advertised on Wall Street became a successful venture. The "canal" became known locally as King's "ditch," and soon factories were running beside it on the river side. Each establishment had its own sluice way and gate. The water coming from the Mohawk dam far above, ran through the canal and down these sluiceways. As the water fell back into the Mohawk, sixteen feet below, it turned the waterwheels in the shops.

After the flour-milling era had passed, other factories took their place. These produced taps and dies for thread-cutting together with pliers and wireshears. Some factories produced cold-pressed nuts while still others made buttons and twine. Here too, was a straw board mill. A cotton factory, two sawmills, a dyeworks and an underwear mill added to the variety.

Another shop later to become famous as "Gages," made lathes and knitting machinery. Nearby was a shop that made cook stoves while to the far end or southwest of the ditch was a black and colored ink factory which still later made "lamp black" having a capacity of thirteen tons per year.

Probably the most notable thing made on the canal were fire-engines. The famous "Button" works later located on Third Street, grew from the John F. Rogers plant on the "ditch."

The power-canal had one formidable enemy, the seasonal high water. As either the Mohawk or Hudson rose to floodtide, the water wheels on the ditch failed to turn. Then the workers were furloughed.<sup>9</sup> But in spite of this drawback, King's Power Canal was a significant factor in early Waterford's prosperity.

The canal can still be seen beyond old Dial City at the left of the 1955 Angus Garrett playground. All the factories, except one, are gone.

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<sup>9</sup> *Diary*, Hugh McArane, Loan of Mrs. James A. Galvin, Waterford.



BUTTON FIRE ENGINES MADE IN WATERFORD, AND FIREMEN





The last remaining manufactory on the "ditch," Mohawk Papers Inc., together with many other concerns which also helped to make Waterford famous are described in later pages.

For posterity's sake we mention what may be but a partial list of Waterford's older industries that have vanished since 1874. We express our appreciation to the 1912 authors of *The Old Town by the Ford* for the names of the old firms like the Button Company, D. B. & J. M. King Co., the Breslin Co., the Holroyd Co., and the Gage Machine Works.

### THE BUTTON FIRE ENGINE WORKS

This fire-engine industry was started on the "ditch" in 1832 by John F. Rogers. He made the "Rogers Patent" hand pumped engines, favorably tested at the U. S. Arsenal at "Gibbonsville" (Watervliet) and at Washington, D. C. Shortly thereafter William Platt took over the business. The engine was described as "a beautiful hand-painted job, which would throw water over 100 feet, passing far above the highest church steeple in town." We can believe the hand-painting of the engines. They were done by an excellent Waterford scenic artist, Ralph Savage, whose artistic oil paintings beginning in 1848 are treasured in Waterford. In 1834 Lysander R. Button joined with Robert Blake and improved the engine which made the name of Button famous throughout the world. The business grew so rapidly that Button left King's "ditch" in 1850, and started his own large steam-operated factory at lower Third St. in Waterford. Other names like Holyrod and Gaunt were also associated with these engines, but the name of Button is best remembered. Both hand-operated and steam fire-engines were made, the first steam job being made in 1860. Robert Blake sold out his interest to the Buttons in 1863. The Button & Blake third class hand-pumper had cylinders 9 inches in diameter with a stroke of 9 inches. The first steam jobs sold for \$2,280.00 and many were in use. They were prime favorites in Troy, Green Island and in all this area. They used 20-80 pounds steam pressure, pumped 600 gallons of water per minute and at last sold for \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00 each.

Familiarity breeds contempt. Waterford built fire engines in quantity and then our interest died. This is not true elsewhere. Mr.

C. A. Whitney of The Chicago Museum obtained an old Button hand-pumper with the nameplate dated 1855 and also marked "Washington" No. 1. This had been a Button hand-pumper made for Troy's Washington Volunteer Company which used 22 men on each engine side.

After a slight overhaul in 1949 it was entered in the Chicago Railroad Fair. National picture magazines show it in action and they declare that "it really pumped water."

Another Button hand-pumper "Tiger" No. 1, also No. 680, found its way to Seattle, Washington State, and fell among friends, the Northwestern Mutual Fire Association. They spent money most freely in reclaiming it. They wrote us in 1953 that it is a "dazzling sight" and Mr. Button would be "proud to see his engine now."

In 1860 the experts Button & Blake said that their concern was the "largest of its kind in the Union," at the same giving revelation of the faults of the outmoded hand-pumpers they had made in the 1840's. These builders and the firemen who operated the first hand-pumpers declared that the sensation in the chest was dreadfully fatiguing. While pumping, they said, "it was like being cut in two." These 1840 pumpers were "side-strokers," of about 18 manpower. The levers the men gripped had a  $3\frac{1}{2}$  foot motion, the stroke commencing at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet from the ground and rising to six feet. Great power was lost in water friction, the water turning at least four right angles. It was difficult, said the builders to shoot a stream more than 120 feet high.

The improved "modern" 1860 side-stroke hand-engine was quite different. It used 56 men with the lever stroke being reduced to three feet. The water ways were now nearly straight from inlet to outlet, "with an abundance of room, so that no power is lost in friction." Their output was then over three engines a month.<sup>10</sup> (One old manufacturing building stands.)

THE D. B. AND J. M. KING CO.—THOS. BRESLIN CO.  
—HOLYROD & CO.

These three concerns, commencing with the Kings, were enterprising groups and once were nationally known. They all made taps

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<sup>10</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, March 17, 1860.

and dies for thread-cutting and the famous "Button" pliers. Later, the Breslin Company operated a large knitting mill. All three were on King's canal, and for years they furnished employment for many Waterford residents. (Factories are gone.)

### THE GAGE MACHINE WORKS

This famed machine company, gaining a world wide reputation, was established by George Gage<sup>11</sup> in 1835, on King's canal. In the mechanical world, for nearly half a century, no turret lathes were more highly-esteemed as money-makers than Gage's "Fox" swivel head-turret lathes. Literally millions of small-machined parts were produced on these machines for our young and growing country.

At one time, no less than fifty-two of Gage's turret lathes were used in W. & L. E. Gurley's Surveying and Instrument Company of Troy, famous makers of instruments of accuracy.

After the Gages passed away, Waterford's Snyder and Metcalf took over the machine plant and continued the high manufacturing standards of the original owners. (Factory gone.)

### THE MOHAWK PAPER MILLS INC. (Origin After 1829)

We call this plant the "Lone Star" of King's Canal. Of all the concerns composing the industrial region, only Mohawk Paper Inc. survives on King's Canal. It came down through the years on the lineage of Gilbert, Murdock and Creighton.<sup>12</sup> (The Enterprise Paper Co.), the Mohawk & Hudson Paper Mill,, the Frank Gilbert Company, and finally, the Mohawk Paper Mills, Inc.

It is the second oldest manufacturing concern in Waterford. The first paper-makers on the "ditch" were young, practical, business men, with a capital stock of \$100,000.00, a large sum for those early days. They produced an excellent quality of paper made from cotton stock and cotton rags. They then produced two tons of paper per day with 40 employees.

The Frank Gilbert Paper Company was absorbed by the Mohawk Paper Makers, Inc. about 1923, later being incorporated as the Mohawk Paper Mills, Inc. the Waterford branch being an affiliate

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<sup>11</sup> *Troy Northern Budget*, April 3, 1874.

<sup>12</sup> *Troy Northern Budget*, April 3, 1874.



of the main plant at Cohoes. The Cohoes and Waterford mill units produce paper of the highest quality, it having a 100-year permanency test. We are pleased to add that this first bound *History of Waterford* is printed on Mohawk paper made in Waterford. The paper's prominence in the book field was first called to our attention by out-of-state publishers and users.

The William Burton & Sons Sawmill, came to Waterford in 1842 and located near the present Eddy Valve Co.. It was one of the country's earliest and finest veneer works. It imported mahogany, rosewood, satin and zebra wood which was stored in the waters of the old Cemetery pond. Five million feet of veneer were made a year and shipped to all parts of the world. (Mill standing.)

On Nov. 11, 1835, H. D. Fuller was making machinery for producing nails. By merely turning a crank his machines (which sold for \$400.00 to \$500.00 each) would produce from 10 to 15 pounds of wrought iron nails per hour.

All kinds of boilers, tanks, bleachers and sheet iron work, were made at Pinkerton & Jones "Globe" Iron Works.<sup>13</sup> It was no baby-sized factory. It made rotary bleachers and dryers 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  feet long and seven feet in diameter for paper mills and also made the boilers for the Button Fire Engines. (Factory gone.)

The early Hugh White Shawtemack flouring mills were obtained in 1874 by the Munsion Mfg. Company which then took the name Massasoit. Here was found the purest water from artesian wells which was mostly useful in their manufacture of silk shirts, the yarn of which was imported from Japan. Massasoit later made women's wrappers and employed 120 persons. Still later cotton batting was made here, while not far away on this same Champlain Canal waterway, it is said that hydraulic cement was made. (Massasoit Factory standing in northside.)

One of the earliest concerns in Waterford was the Waterford soap and candle factory established by Joshua Mors in 1830 in an old wooden building on Fourth Street between Broad and Middle Streets. James Blake purchased the plant and some years later sold it to William Mors. The great Waterford fire of 1841 started in or near this plant. The buildings were rebuilt and improved in 1873

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

making it the largest and best plant of its kind north of Albany. Here at times were turned out ten thousand boxes of soap and candles a year, from 20 or more tons of tallow. Later a brick building on the same site was used as the home of the Waterford Shirt and Collar Company, followed by J. C. Platt who made the "Button" boiler, a central house heating unit. Here later Mr. Platt also made a patent plow and, still later, it was the first home of the Ford Knitting Company, whose building was finally destroyed by fire.

The final business concern at this site was the Frank Jelf blacksmith shop and not far away was another owned by Platt & George Steenburg, the glowing furnaces and flying sparks never failing to attract our boyish interest. In partly accounting for this attraction old books assert there is no older and more honorable occupation than that of the blacksmith. (Building gone.)

To show Waterford's full versatility before we mention some of those veteran concerns still remaining, we cite the departed barley mill, the chair factory, the pearling mill for making thread, the flax mill, an auger mill, and a hay press factory, also the whiskey making plant of John Titcomb, near the old weighlock and the dye works nearby, owned by John Ranney. There was also the tannery of Moses Duncomb, later owned by G. W. Powers, near the southeast corner of First and Division Streets together with the brush-making business started by Edward Van Kleeck about 1864 and an artificial stone and drain pipe business by a Mr. Fletcher. Part of the first hydraulic cement developed in the U. S. by Canvass White for the Erie and Champlain Canals was also said to have been ground in the Northside zone.

Dr. Henry Jones manufactured both pills and medicines on the southeast corner of Middle and First Streets.

Gone also is the large cider and vinegar business of the Hicks' although the building still remains in Front Street "on the Battery."

Almost the last firm, with the inherited mechanical skill of the 1800 group to pass from the scene, was the Roberts & Holloway Machine Company. The word "cannot" was unknown to this firm, and their ingenuity seemed almost commonpalce. Once the writer observed these mechanics contracting to do a piece of work much wider than their shop—and wondered. Returning later, a long loco-

motive rail was seen moving back and forth through a hole this firm had cut through the shop's wall. The excess length traveled in free space outdoors as the shaper inside the shop cut the rail end to form. Some old Troy firms also started in Waterford. The Ludlow Valve Company started on lower Second Street, and Mr. John M. Corliss was listed as a collar manufacturer. The other 1955 plants and manufacturing concerns are now listed.

#### THE JOHN FRIEDRICHSOHN COOPERAGE COMPANY (1791-1955)

The cooperage business, the oldest business in Waterford, was established here over a century and a half ago in the Northside zone by Joseph Fixture. It was given impetus by the building of the 1825 Champlain canal. This cooperage vocation in early days ranked next in value (as concerns wood) after the sawmills had cut their needs. The pork barrels in which Troy's "Uncle Sam" Wilson packed his 1812 meat shipments are said to have come from the plant of John Friedrichsohn<sup>14</sup> who bought out Joe Fixture's one-man cooperage shop, the latter established in 1791. The 139-year-old Friedrichsohn plant, now run by descendants, the Moselys and Sausvilles, have made barrels for five wars, 1,000 new and old barrels a day being turned out in 1941. The plant is in the "Northside."

In 1825 this old industry was joined by others run by Driscoll, Sheridan, Brewster, Preston and Hemstead. This group of six concerns made barrels carrying produce through the old Champlain canal to all ports of the world.

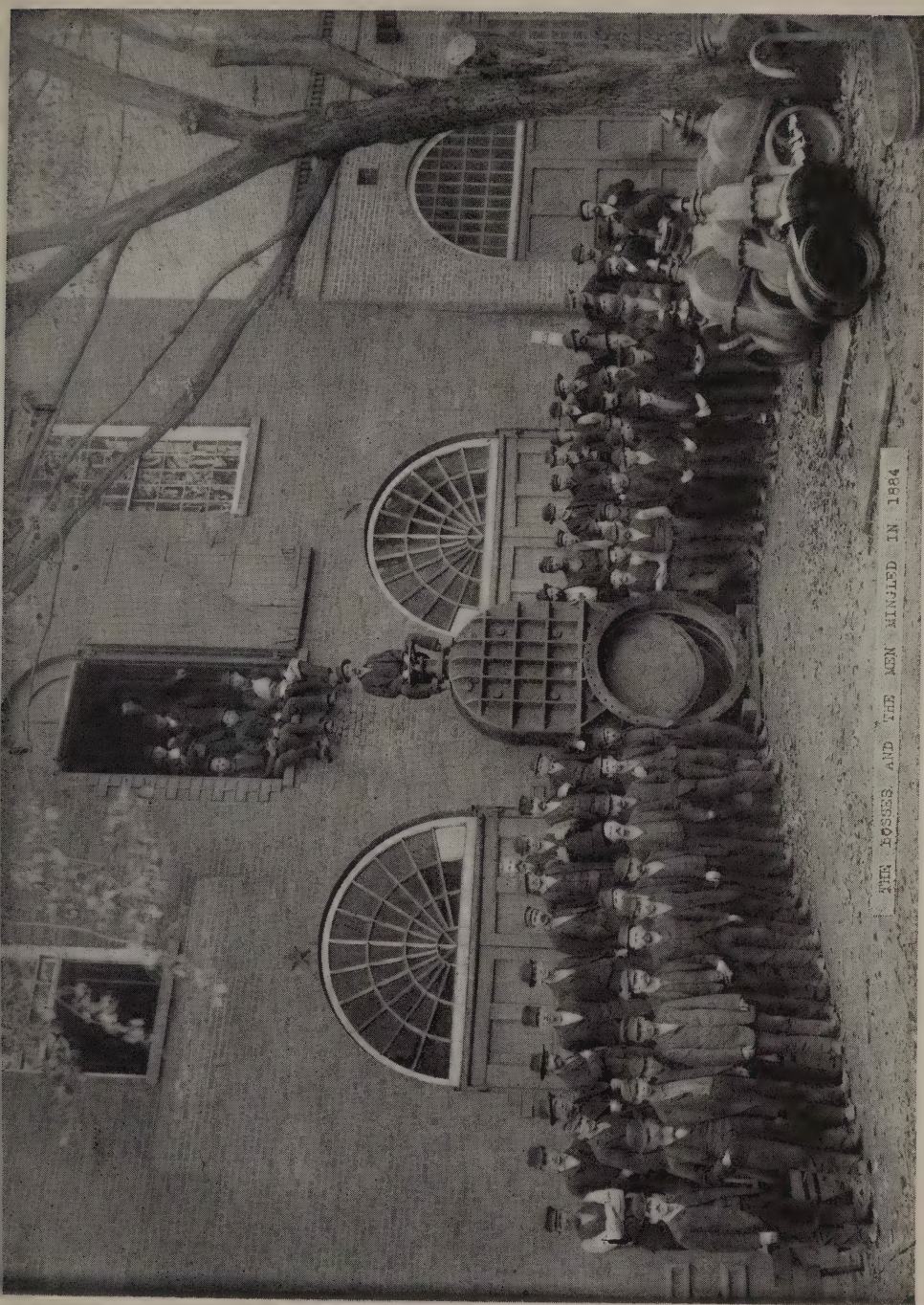
Another early wartime product came from a large slaughterhouse "on the hill" where beef was killed, barreled and shipped to the United States Army during the Mexican war. Early papers say that a firm of four men and a boy killed 100 cattle (mostly 500 pound bullocks) in seven hours.

Before the days when the somewhat intricate knitting-needle appeared, Waterford seemingly had its machines to make cloth. The *Waterford Atlas* of March 20, 1833, tells about the "quick" work of two girls. It said that these girls together, "weaved" 480

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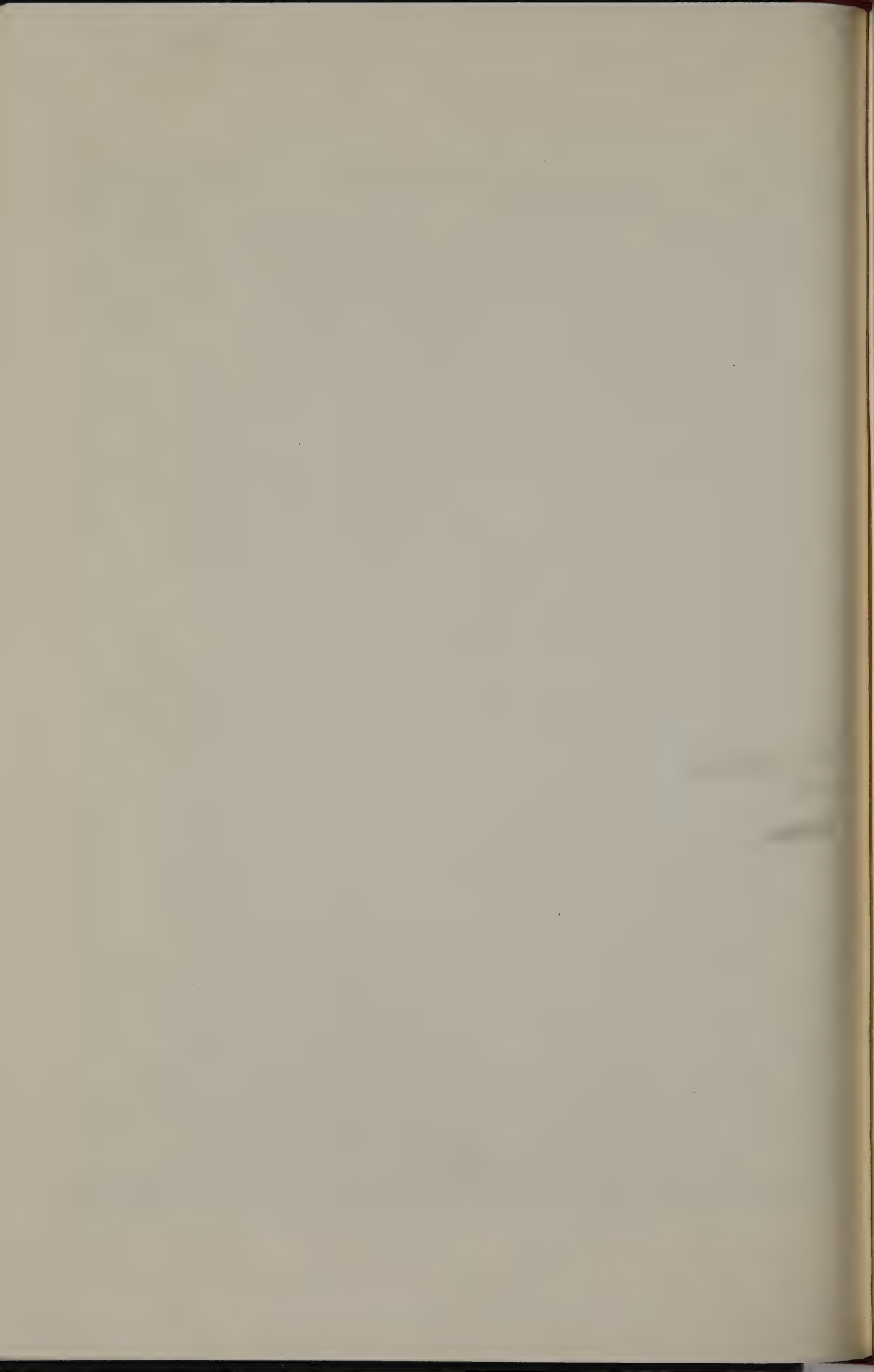
<sup>14</sup> *Troy Record*, Aug. 22, 1941.





THE LOSSES AND THE MEN MINGLED IN 1884

THE EDDY VALVE COMPANY, WATERFORD, N. Y. (Nov. 1884)





yards of "three-quarters" (No. 18) cloth in one day. In a week they "weaved" 1680 yards, for which they were paid \$4.20 each.

### WATERFORD'S KNITTING MILLS

After the flour-milling business vanished, most of the structures were converted into mills for making underwear. As late as 1912, underwear was the town's principal product. One of the first plants built in 1891 was the J. W. Ford Company and that concern under a new name now operates the only remaining knit goods mills in town. It now bears the name of the Robert Reis Company and is mentioned elsewhere.

Others were the Kavanaughs. Luke of the later concern who organized the Kavanaugh mills also had a mill to make knitting "burrs" which he had invented. Still others were the Waterford Knitting Co. (Thos. Breslin's) together with the Ormsby Textile, the two Pynes Mills, the Clover plant, the Hudson Valley Company, the Clyde Co., the Ormsby-Morris concern, making knit gloves, the plant of Stover & Pynes, who made knit neckties at the old Pynes or Eureka mill site.

### THE EDDY VALVE COMPANY

This is the third oldest of the Waterford Manufacturing companies and has been running continuously since 1847. It had its inception when Isaac Eddy, an engineer with two sons, moved from Weathersfield, Vermont to Troy and next to Waterford where his youngest son George W. Eddy started a foundry. George first made stoves, iron castings, and steam-car wheels, calling his concern the Mohawk & Hudson Iron Foundry and Machine Shop. He selected "Dial" City, the historic site of Hendrick Coster's Island, for his shop. Coster had married Gertje Van Schaick early in the 1680's and the island was said to be Gertje's dowry.

Brainard King, an earlier Waterfordian, tells that George W. Eddy built his first shop without a basement to avoid evacuations, out of respect for the dead known to be buried at the site. George Eddy was a careful manufacturer. Of his car wheels it was said that none were ever found defective.

As his experience grew he began to make "chilled" railway



wheels. During one of his first years his shop also turned out 6000 stoves. Later Eddy made lathe chucks, wine and straw-presses, bailers, axes, hitching-posts and finally before going into valve manufacturing, made cast-iron statuary. Some of the latter are still kept as relics at the Valve shop. The last shop that Eddy built, a three-story brick-building, is one of those still in use, writes Manager George Macdonald of the J. B. Clow & Sons, the present owners of the Eddy Valve Shop Company.

George W. Eddy invented the "taper seat valve" in 1873 for which the Columbia Exposition awarded him a medal in 1893, and later he obtained a patent on his "Mohawk" hydrant. These valves and hydrants were and still are, highly regarded. In 1875, John W. Knickerbacker, Howard C. Rogers, and others purchased the Eddy Valve Company. This concern continued under Thomas A. Knickerbacker and his son John until 1945. Then it was bought by another typical American group, the J. B. Clow & Sons, which, starting on a borrowed \$300.00 in 1878, has built the concern into a million-dollar organization.

Improved valves and hydrants are made and distributed throughout the world, by the Clow Company to a market started 108 years ago by the Eddy Valve Company. The firm now employs approximately 200 persons.

#### WATERFORD VILLAGE'S GAS WORKS

About the year 1860, our village streets were illuminated by gas. The last gaslight pole which remained in front of the Baptist Church in Third Street, was removed in 1956.

Mr. Thomas Knickerbacker and Mr. William Humphreys introduced and headed this innovation which gladdened and made safer, night travel in our village.

Mr. Humphreys, the esteemed ancestor of Waterford's Humphrey's-Barker clan, came from England in 1859 especially for this task, he having learned and mastered illuminating gas manufacture in that country. Having learned that a gas works was in progress in Waterford he came here and became the gas works supervisor upon its completion. The plant was located at No. 1 South Street where the staunch brick Humphreys-Barker house was built in 1884.

The gas was not made from coal. Two of the ingredients that were burned to produce the gas were rosin and sawdust. The third element could not be discovered. Support for the rosin gas came from a book<sup>15</sup> owned by Supt. S. Dillon of the Niagara-Mohawk Power Corporation.

Some years passed and a new plant (The Union Gas Works) was built in Lansingburg also to supply Waterford's needs. Mr. Humphreys also directed the Lansingburg concern and at the same time bought the property at No. 1 South Street, where the old gas pit still remains.

When the Lansingburg establishment merged with the one in Troy, Mr. Humphreys went to Dansville, N. Y., and there set up a gas plant.<sup>16</sup>

As late as July 1909 only 200 families in Waterford used manufactured gas for cooking. In recent years, however, with the advent of natural gas, the consumption has increased enormously, gas now being used in many homes for central heating.

That the Knickerbacker-Humphreys concern was actually the first Waterford public gas supplier is placed in doubt by a newly found 1834 Waterford news item. This published by the *Waterford Atlas* states that the "Gas Light Manufactory of J. G. Webb, took fire on July 10, 1834." The first Waterford gas "retort" was made for the Army by the Gage King's Canal firm in 1861. Probably Webb would not have used a tank or retort to deliver his gas as early as 1834. If not, he would need pipes in the street. So it cannot be positively stated whether J. G. Webb or the Knickerbacker-Humphrey group first placed the old street gas pipes and the accompanying light poles.

### THE ROBERT REIS KNITTING COMPANY

The Reis company is the only knit goods concern in Waterford and is the successor to the Ford Manufacturing Company, the fourth oldest manufacturing plant in Waterford, which was founded on December 15, 1891. It was incorporated by John W. Ford, and was first located at about No. 37 Fourth Street. Sometime between 1891 and 1895 the Fourth Street structure burned and after buying prop-

<sup>15</sup> *Romance of the Gas Industry.*

<sup>16</sup> Waterford Gas Company data contributed by William H. Barker, March 3, 1953.

erty from Bernard Lavery, on August 22, 1896, Ford built a new factory near the old D. & H. depot or freight center on upper Second Street.

The Reis Company with a considerable weekly payroll, has been of great value to the people of Waterford and vicinity for many years.

The Reis Company bought the Ford concern on October 11, 1919 and in 1924 put on the large mill addition to the south.

The Reis Company knits, bleaches and sews into garments, men's underwear of every type, making balbriggan, union suits, and sport wear from nylon, dacron and various combinations from synthetics, worsted and cotton.

The Company buys its yarns, and has a large foreign export trade. They were heavy suppliers for the U. S. Government and the U. S. Navy during War II working over 90 per cent of their plant on garments made from 75 per cent wool, with 25 per cent cotton. They also produced special or heavy garments for arctic use. Many of their garments have special features and all are "perma-sized" to avoid shrinkage.

The concern employed 400 persons during War II and has in peace time 150 persons. Its president is Arthur Reis 3rd, and its Superintendent, Irving F. Baker.

On its payrolls are several Waterford personages who, having special talents, have worked for the plant up to 42 years. The workers as a whole are members of the International Ladies Garment Workers of the A. F. of L.

#### THE LAUGHLIN TEXTILE MILLS, INC.

This concern occupies the substantial, several-story brick manufactory on Mohawk Ave., in "Dial City" which was built in 1894.

The Laughlin Company weaves from beautiful synthetic yarns, nylon, rayon and other material, the tapes and narrow fabrics so popular in the interior of 1955 automobiles.

It also makes for the textile industry in general, narrow trimmings and bindings. Fiber glass fabrics are also produced on some of the thirty-six looms employed in the 35,000 square foot factory.



In addition to the United States demands, the Laughlin Company has a large foreign trade.

The concern recognizes Waterford's first name by adopting as its trade brand the name of "Halfmoon."

The plant has up to 100 employees and the owners are Edwin T. Laughlin, Edwin B. Laughlin, Fred B. McDowell, and Marie E. McDowell.

This building was once owned by the Ormsby-Morris Company which in its earliest days was distinguished by an engineering feat on its high brick smokestack.

Soon after being erected the chimney developed a  $28\frac{1}{2}$  inch tip or tilt like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. A local contracting engineer Ira Parker, devised a manner of straightening the 100-foot stack without rebuilding it.<sup>17</sup> It has remained vertical for over three-score years.

#### CLUETT-PEABODY BLEACHERY, PEEBLES ISLAND

This modern plant was added to the Cluett-Peabody Company in 1910. Those were the days when men wore detachable collars and the bleachery was required to care for the miles of cloth that the Troy plant used. Doubtless the apparent availability of great quantities of water on the island determined the location of the plant, but the hardness of the water both from beneath ground and from the Mohawk river made trouble for the collar concern.

As the detachable collar faded largely from use, the bleachery took over both the bleaching and the Sanforizing processing of shirt material. Here almost endless rolls of broadcloth, madras, lawns, meshes and sportshirt goods are sewn into great lengths, treated by fire to remove minute knobs, washed, bleached and Sanforized to insure against shrinkage within the tolerances of less than one per cent.

Although the collar trade is greatly diminished, some of the material treated on Peebles Island is also used for collars.

Nothing is lacking at the plant to insure the production of the finest of wearing apparel, for which the "Arrow" brand is famous.

A complete water filtration plant softens and provides the purest

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<sup>17</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, Dec. 14, 1894.

of water, which in turn adds to the attractiveness of the goods handled.

In 1955 Joseph Horsfall was Manager of the Bleachery and Frank J. Rogan, Superintendent. There are approximately 200 employees at the plant which is served by the Delaware and Hudson railway, and trailer trucks.

#### STATE CANAL SHOPS, DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS AT WATERFORD

This large facility of the State of New York came into being about 1918 with the advent of the 1000 ton Erie Barge Canal. It is situated on Davis Avenue west of the Rural Cemetery and adjacent to Washington Avenue.

The shops have a large dry dock and pool where any of the heavy vessels used in barge canal maintenance may be repaired or stored.

These shops care for the area west to Hoffmans, New York, and north to Rouses Point. Hydraulic dredges and large floating derricks form part of the equipment used at this center.

Mechanics and barge canal personnel care for minor repairs at barge canal locks, the major repair projects such as new gates, etc., being done by contract.

The Waterford center has a modern carpenter shop and also has equipment for and does major repairs to all electric equipment used on the barge canal.

R. S. Watson is the Section Superintendent and Clifford C. Hughes has charge of the floating equipment.

The working force of the State Canal Shops is under 100 in 1955.

#### STATE SHOP, HIGHWAYS DISTRICT NO 1 AT WATERFORD

This highway shop was built in 1918 or about the time the Barge Canal was put through Waterford. It started on Ninth Street but in 1954 was moved into fine new buildings on Davis Avenue, close to the State's Canal shops.

District No. 1 covers a wide range of territory, caring for the highway needs of Saratoga, Rensselaer, Albany, Schenectary, Washington, Warren, Greene and Essex Counties.

The mission of this district is to provide maintenance of every nature along the many highways within its territory.

At the Waterford yards are great stores of steel conduit piping for drainage uses, together with similar quantities of large vitreous tiling pipe.

Here also are excellent machine tools and facilities for caring for the many trucks, tools and machines used on roadwork. The local shop area is well arranged with black topped roads and neat surroundings.

The number of employees is below one hundred and the Superintendent of District No. 1 is E. S. Staats and his Assistant, H. Maynard.

#### SILICONE PRODUCTS DEPARTMENT, GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY

This Silicone plant on the Mechanicville road, two miles from Waterford was erected in 1948 and cost \$13,000,000. Its 375 employees work constantly developing still more products from silicone, that chemical coming from the silicone dioxide family. This has a rock quartz or sand base and when compounded with chemicals, produces a cross between organic and inorganic materials having the stability of its inorganic forbear, quartz.<sup>18</sup>

The number of the 375 General Electric silicone employees related to the \$13,000,000 investment shows an interesting contrast to old world figures. Englishmen J. M. Keynes said it took an investment of \$6,000.00 to provide work for a single English employee. General Electric's high capital investment together with its continued research, represents an outlay of nearly \$35,000 per man. Last American figures show a plant investment of \$10,800.00 required for each person similarly employed.<sup>19</sup>

Many of the silicone products are quite mysterious and the number is constantly increasing. A ball of silicone putty will both stretch and bounce like rubber, yet when shaped a certain way then dropped, will crack like peanut brittle. This "plastic like glass" as it has been called, has an almost incredible number of uses. Electric motor

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18 *House Beautiful*, Jan. 1950 (Marion Gough).

19 *Capital News Review*, No. 3, Aug 1950.



weight may be greatly reduced by silicone insulation which has a safe temperature range of nearly 600 degrees F. Silicone sheds water and is used for water resistant clothing and fabrics. Used in paint, if baked on, it helps resist both heat and cold and will insure permanency of color.

Silicone helps tire manufacturers remove new tires from moulds, and hot bread from baker's tins. It kills foaming and polishes nearly everything including our spectacle glass. Jet engines may now fly in sub-zero zones with nearly red-hot engines with silicone aid and there is hardly a U. S. plant that is not helped by the use of silicones. Silicones are also used in hand lotions while one of the most important applications is for gaskets used at very high temperatures. Dr. Charles Reed of Waterford's silicone plant points out<sup>20</sup> that by changing the structure of the silicone chain, literally countless materials may yet be made.

#### NATIONAL AUTOMOTIVE FIBRES, INC.

This large manufacturing concern has three plants in Waterford, two being in the Northside section and one at North Waterford. The latter is engaged in changing jute into floor coverings for automobiles.

The major Northside mill, the former Kavanaugh or Beaver factory on "King's" canal, makes all kinds of auto interior trim, cotton batting, quilted robes and back covers. The company has a total of five plants, two being in Cohoes.

Approximately 315 persons are employed in the Waterford plants.

Waterford's George C. Wolfe is Personnel Manager and Thomas Breen is the Division Manager of five plants.

Mr. Paul Shay is Assistant General Manager of the National Automotive Fibres, Inc. The concern occupies considerable floor-space.

#### THE GRAND UNION STOREHOUSES

This large storehouse situated on a twenty-acre plot is partly located on the former site of the old Dutch Church, 1 6/10 miles from Broad Street, Waterford. The concern employs 26 great trailer

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<sup>20</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, Feb. 26, 1955.

trucks and supplies all kinds of merchandise to 89 Grand Union stores in Northern New York, all Vermont, and the west zone of Massachusetts.

The supply-demand of these Grand Union stores has become so imperative that the delivery slogan could resemble that of the U. S. Mail.

Not once in ten years have these trucks failed to reach at some time each day, any of the Grand Union Stores that they supply.

Arthur Hennington was the 1955 General Manager of the Waterford plant which employs approximately 100 persons. In 1956 Robert F. DeWeese is the Manager.

A second establishment on the "Battery" or Front Street, Waterford, keeps in repair the trucks used in the delivery service.

In 1955 the final phase of a \$2,500,000 modernization and building plan was in the course of construction at the main Waterford food depot. The main warehouse was increased to over 90,000 square feet and the frozen food storage section also was increased by an 11,000 foot addition. Merchandise is stored and handled by the latest methods and the loading of ten semi-trailer trucks can now be done within the building.

### THE JOHN E. MATTON & SON, INC.

Another concern, now over a half century old, started in Waterford beside the old Champlain Canal at the "Two Locks." This, the John E. Matton & Son, Inc. is now big business. John Matton started a canal shipyard in 1900; and commenced making good canal boats in quantity. The coming of the Barge Canal left the "Two Locks" shipyard high and dry. Needing a new site, John and son Ralph settled on the Hudson, actually atop a prehistoric Mahican Indian campground, and began to make large canal barges, and, during War I, deck barges for the Army. Matton & Son are now on Van-Schaick's Island, Cohoes.

When War II came nothing was too big or too modern for the Mattons. Out of these expanded yards came U. S. Navy Sub Chasers, steel tugs, and steel oil barges, some of the latter with 6,000 barrel capacity. The last five steel tugs lately built for the U. S. Navy were 107 feet long and were driven by 1200 horsepower Diesel engines.

If Lansingburghers hear a crashing-whistling sound in mid-winter, it will be Matton's big tug smashing Hudson ice and keeping an open channel.

In closing the chapter on Waterford industries, we give a possible reason for the disappearance of the half hundred different enterprises located here in the 1800's. By 1808, eastern New York's pioneering days were gone. A new aristocracy based on hard work had appeared in Waterford. This had built up under the Kings, the Eddys and others a miniature manufacturing empire and tokens of their success is evidenced by the erection of thirty-odd elegant homes of the Post-Colonial type, still noticeable about the village.

Then the flour mills disappeared with unprofitable wheat production. Repeated wheat harvests had exhausted New York's virgin land, and the West with its newer soil had snatched the wheat trade by producing flour at lower prices. Next the canals appeared and then the railroads. Both these opened up against our local industries severe and wide fields of competition. Commodities instead of starting here were now flowing to or past us.

Also, the "Yankee Invaders," now our aging captains of industry had with their sons, settled down to enjoy their earned wealth.

In some cases these wealthy men had deliberately spared their sons the mistaken "ignominy" of either work or shop training with unhappy results. Forgotten was the fact that labor is the natural lot of man and that most good things come from it.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### WATERFORD EDUCATION AND ITS SCHOOLS

WATERFORD'S educational system is very old. It was traced partly by records to 1796, when Waterford and Halfmoon were then a single district, and in Waterford itself to the year 1788.

It was doubtless established by our first Dutch settlers who were Calvinists. They believed that each person should be able to read, and that each was responsible for his own behavior. Since the Bible contained the rules of conduct, those being able to read were therefore not dependent upon others for its teachings. The first Dutch schoolmaster in Albany was John Schutt, in the year 1648<sup>1</sup> or 1665. Pupils began their education when seven or eight years of age. The Dutch course lasted for three years when the pupils made room for others. Those not finishing the course in time were compelled to enter night school. Three daily sessions of three hours each were held ending at nine o'clock in the evening. School was conducted for six days a week throughout the year, without a vacation. Discipline was severe, a heavy wooden paddle and a switch being used to enforce it.

Upon the second period of English rule in 1674, these pioneer American schools passed into the control of the Reformed Dutch Church in New York City. During the century after Dutch rule however, there came a gradual separation of that church's influence and secular control of the schools became the order. (Kilpatrick, *Dutch Schools of New Netherland*.)

The first recorded Waterford school was taught by James Dugan and existed it is said, prior to 1788.

The first Waterford-Halfmoon School Commissioners of April 5, 1796 were—Guert Van Schoonhoven, Hugh Peebles, Benjamin Rosecrans, Benjamin Mix, and Robert Kennedy. Waterford's first School

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<sup>1</sup> *Free Schools*, T. E. Finegan, 1921, p. 653.

Inspector was Nicholas B. Doe, a business man, a lawyer and finally a Supreme Court Judge of Common Pleas. Halfmoon records<sup>2</sup> show the passing of an "Act for the establishment of Common Schools" as early as June 19, 1812 with funds for the same, and on April 6, 1814, the School Commissioners were given eighty-nine cents for each day they served the town on school work.

In the year 1813 Waterford, on the upsurge of learning, erected "Classic Hall" at 48 First Street, with the Latin inscription "Esto Monumentum Aere Perennius" (*Let This Be a Monument More Lasting Than Bronze*) carved boldly on a front stone.

The stalwart structure is of Flemish bond brick design and carries lightly its 140 years. This venerable landmark, whose earlier years are unrecorded, was a young men's school in 1832 and was known as Waterford's Classical Institution. Deacon Whitney and later Thomas Farnham of Union College were administrators, and here the school pens were carved from poultry quills by the schoolmaster. The tuition fees were modest, \$3.00 being charged per term for Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic. Four dollars more brought English, Grammar and Geography, while "Higher" education cost but \$5.00 the term.

During this period and up to 1838, Waterford had six private schools,<sup>3</sup> two being for young children and the third for young ladies. The latter school was conducted by a Miss Shaw in 1831. She was the successor to Emma Willard whose school we shall now describe.

#### EMMA WILLARD'S WATERFORD SCHOOL

In the days of 1800 on west Broad Street, near old Flat Iron Park, was the palatial home of Gen. Guert Van Schoonhoven. Here gathered the top rank of Waterford society and Governor DeWitt Clinton too was a familiar figure.

Here also came the visiting Irish poet Sir Thomas Moore to write his ode to the Cohoes Falls. Other visiting celebrities were sure to pay this social abode a visit. It was natural that here should be discussed the theme of higher education for young women. Over-

<sup>2</sup> Town of Halfmoon record book, Ellis Smith, Town clerk.

<sup>3</sup> Waterford School No. 1 Records (Script), author unknown.

stress had been the rule on the schooling of young men, while the smaller portion of education became the woman's lot.

Mrs. John (Emma) Willard of Middlebury, Vermont, was then the first and foremost advocate of education for women in our land. At Middlebury in 1814, she was conducting a girls' school, hard pressed by the economies of the frugal "Granite" state. She had devised a new method of teaching, had introduced new studies and in general had wide plans for improving female education. Waterford's business men, meeting at the Van Schoonhoven home, developed a plan for a woman's school and had sent a copy to Gov. DeWitt Clinton. The Governor in turn asked Mrs. Willard to come to New York State, following a letter she had written him about December 31, 1818.

The result was an Act by the State of New York incorporating the Waterford Female Seminary or Academy on March 19, 1819. Another feature of that act, gave Female Academies a share of literary funds, Waterford being the first place it was invoked.

In the spring of 1819 Emma Willard came to Waterford and opened her school first it is said in the Demarest building on Broad Street (The Morgan House)<sup>4</sup> and finally at about 77 Second Street, at this time introducing the study of higher mathematics. Emma Willard's first graduate was a Miss Cramer, later a Mrs. Curtis, a lady of distinction and learning.<sup>5</sup>

Mrs. Rebecca A. Grout of First Street also attended this school.<sup>5a</sup>

Mrs. Willard was a lady of letters. The correspondence of President John Adams (Vol. 1, No. 40, of March 4, 1820) acknowledges her letter of December 9, 1819 and rejoices that the New York Legislature had patronized her university. Other letters show that Mrs. Willard thoroughly believed in her great mission and knew well how to accomplish it.

It is interesting to note the existence of dissenters in those early days. After she had left our village the *Waterford Atlas* of March 27, 1833 coldly mentions Mrs. Willard as having leaned too much to the "rich" and adds that the poor too should have some

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<sup>4</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, May 7, 1886.

<sup>5</sup> S. J. Hale, *Distinguished Women*.

<sup>5a</sup> *Troy Times*, April 25, 1898



advantages. The news writer also rebuked her for having complained about the poverty of her own institution. The note of poverty sounded by that columnist indicates the difficult days that followed the Revolution and the War of 1812. This probably was the ultimate reason why Emma Willard's Seminary left Waterford. Money was still very scarce and even the sovereign State of New York had dropped to the low estate of raising money for "literature" by the lottery method.

Early in 1821, Mrs. Willard became unhappy over her failure to obtain what she regarded as a proper school building in Waterford.

To this was added the failure of the New York Legislature to endow her project as she had expected.

A number of Troy people became interested and began to take steps to have such a seminary established in Troy. On March 6, 1821 they induced the Common Council to raise \$4,000.00 by tax upon the freeholders upon certain wards of that city. Mrs. Willard then moved her Seminary to Troy.

Our village was poorer by losing Emma Willard's School. Waterford since 1799 had been committed to higher education. Between 1779 and 1780, our community tried in vain to have Clinton College, finally called Union, settle here instead of Schenectady.<sup>6</sup>

Reviewing Mrs. Willard's career, credit and praise must be given her. From the start she seemed to know her destiny and advanced steadily toward it. Her miniature Waterford school has in the years following developed into the beautiful Troy educational center known far and wide for its advantages in education for women. Thus Mrs. Willard developed woman's natural heritage, perhaps far beyond her dreams of 1819.

Mrs. Willard was the author of several works on history, together with other books and addresses covering educational topics.

A volume of her poems published somewhat later, contained many gems including:

"Rocked in the cradle of the deep,  
I lay me down in peace to sleep;  
Secure I rest upon the wave,  
For thou, O Lord, has power to save.

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<sup>6</sup> *Union University*, Vol. No. 1, p. 30, A. V. Raymond, 1907.

I know that thou wouldst not slight my call,  
For thou dost mark the sparrow's fall;  
And calm and peaceful is my sleep,  
Rock'd in the cradle of the deep."

This was set to music by the English composer Knight, to the tune we know today.

Mrs. Willard had her lighter moments too, as proved by her

"DeWitt Clinton, that great freeman,  
Fell down stairs,—  
And broke his knee-pan."

We agree that this was not so meritorious. It was once however, quoted throughout New York State, and it shows, that like most of us, she was human.

It may be that Mrs. Willard was greatly surprised by the reception that the press gave this notable poem. Perhaps at that date it had not been established that when a dog bites a man that isn't news, but when a man bites a dog that is news.

It carries the moral that one must watch every word and action; that the noble must always be noble to fulfill the heavy obligations imposed by "noblesse oblige." Mrs. Willard was the first woman to be elected to the American Hall of Fame.<sup>6a</sup> The Waterford Ladies School destined to succeed Emma Willard's school, was advertised in the *Ballston Spa Gazette* on January 7, 1823 as having opened at Waterford on October 3, 1822. Miss Haight taught no less than eight fundamental subjects for \$20.00 per annum. Ten other subjects of higher education including chemistry, astronomy and philosophy cost \$24.00 per year. Drawing, painting and painting on velvet were added for \$32.00 per annum, with French and music offered too, if enough pupils applied for them.

Thus a top-notch education could be obtained in Waterford for the (not then) trivial sum of seventy-six dollars. There was nothing doubtful about this school or its teacher for the Rev. Samuel Blatchford, D.D., of Lansingburg and Waterford, testified publicly in the same advertisement to the character and accomplishments of Miss Haight and invited encouragement for her seminary.

<sup>6a</sup> *Times Record*, March 8, 1950.

But it must have been that this seminary for ladies offered too much for too little, for while one Waterford news writer in 1833 still smouldered a bit about Emma Willard and the loss of her school, still another editor writing a year earlier in the *Waterford Union* bemoaned the loss of a woman's school (doubtless Miss Haight's) by saying, "The spirit which once hovered our village, has reorganized the dismembered material of a former Institution by building up a Female Seminary, did not subside in a single temple of science, since a High School was established last spring in charge of Thomas J. Farnham, while the District School has one of the most able teachers of the country."

It may well be that there were several attempts made to establish a woman's seminary here after Emma Willard left, for later a Miss Shaw started still another similar school at the Emma Willard site.

Concerning the 1832's editors remarks about the "high school" it must be said that he must have referred to some other school of higher education, for general legislation for actual High Schools was not passed until 1854.

Meanwhile the "Academy" system was in vogue. Waterford's Academy among others, was recognized by New York State as being the medium or gateway to the learned professions for those lacking the financial means for a collegiate education.

Still another unattached school was "Mrs. Estabrook's School" which for years and years according to old papers, was a village institution "on the Street where James Cook lived."

WATERFORD FEMALE SEMINARY, was one of the successors to Emma Willard's school and occupied the same building at about 77 Second Street. Mrs. Willard left Waterford in 1821 and the *Waterford Atlas* of 1835 reported that the successor school in Waterford had a number of students "from abroad as well as from our villages." It had what would now be regarded as an amusing schedule of rates, so much for board and laundry and a bit more for firewood for those not going home in the evening. Its Principal was first a Miss Shaw and at last reports in 1835 a Miss LeMon conducted the school with Miss J. A. Lemon Teaching music.



THE DISTRICT SCHOOL was doubtless one of those established on June 19, 1812 when Waterford was still joined to Halfmoon precinct. The *Waterford Union* of 1832 reports "The District School has been furnishing for several years, ordinary English education and also has higher departments of learning."

Dr. Elijah Porter lecturing before the Waterford "Lyceum" on September 11, 1833 states that the school had 120 pupils daily. No available records tell where the school was located. Tuition was not free but a local editor of the 1800's declares that "no one has yet been rejected for poverty."

In 1838 William Day, teacher, reported 232 pupils, he and another being the only instructors. That schoolhouse must have been rather crowded since Dr. Porter mentioned that the Baptists were using it for church meetings and that it would take 200 comfortably. This school was doubtless used until 1849 when the first so-called "public school" was erected at the northeast corner of Fourth and Division Streets. The former furnished "ordinary English education" and had a higher department of learning.

THE WATERFORD ACADEMY reported by our first history as a famous institution, was situated on the northeast corner of Division and Sixth Streets close to where the first St. Mary's church stood. Its last site was at the former Emma Willard School on 2nd Street.<sup>7</sup> The date of its erection is unknown but it was incorporated by New York State by a special act of the Legislature on April 28, 1834.<sup>8</sup> Many Waterford men were prepared for college at this institution which was admitted to the Regents on February 5, 1839.

So well established was its reputation that there were frequently twenty or more out of town students studying here. Its principals were

Rev. Villeroy D. Reed.....	1835
Taylor Lewis .....	1836-1837
William J. Seymour .....	1838
Samuel R. House .....	1839-1840
William G. Lloyd .....	1841-1847
Zenophon Haywood .....	

<sup>7</sup> *Saratoga County, The Saratogian*, 1899, p. 345.

<sup>8</sup> *Historical Record, University State of New York*, F. B. Hough, 1885, p. 722.

Prof. Taylor Lewis came to Waterford Academy from Ogdensburg Academy. He was then reported as being the best Hebrew scholar in America. He was later appointed by Union College as its Professor of Ancient Languages. Prof. Lewis was a lawyer and the son of an officer in the Revolution, from nearby Northumberland.

Waterford Academy was merged with the Academic Department of the Waterford Union School and admitted as such to the Regents on June 2, 1871.

In 1898 it was given High School rank.<sup>9</sup> In 1834, its Trustees purchased a separate building for the scholars of its female department. The fall term for the ladies commenced on Monday, September 10, under the administration of the Misses Lemon. William Baker was then President of the Board of Trustees for the Waterford Academy and for this new ladies section.

VOLUNTARY UN-ORGANIZED EDUCATIONAL UNITS, were numerous. The Waterford "Lyceum" met monthly and had thirty members. It was conducted by certain professional men of our village and town and it gave instruction in Natural Science, History, Botany and Chemistry. Doctors and lawyers lectured to the group composed of those forced to leave formal schooling to earn a livelihood.

The Lyceum also was constantly on the alert for speakers, especially European travelers. The visit of the noted Samuel Rafinesque to our village in 1833 resulted in Waterford changing the name of Lansingburg's Bald Mountain to Mount Rafinesque, a name it carries to this day. Rafinesque delighted the Lyceum group with his story of this 1300 foot mountain which they had hardly noticed until his Waterford speech. The Rhetorical Association and the Mechanics Debating Society both resulted in the uplift of the young people and were definitely good institutions according to the *Waterford Atlas* of 1833.

Music-lovers had their Handel & Haydn Society which met each Friday. The Thespian Society, too, as far back as February 12, 1834 put on shows like the "Moral Tragedy of Cato" to get funds to purchase a Library for the Waterford Classical Institute.

The author has been both mightily pleased and helped by Water-

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<sup>9</sup> *Educational Corporations, New York State*, S. L. Gardiner, 1922, p. 10.

ford's libraries, which have existed since 1804. The first was a circulating library and its books were rented. The next was known as the "District Library" and the school authorities took great pains in passing fines to get the books returned. The books were kept in the Town Hall and the Public School, respectively. Finally on February 28, 1895 it was chartered under the Regents as the "Waterford Free Public Library." Thus for a century and a half our small place has enjoyed this great privilege, preceding a similar facility of a nearby city by 148 years.

A Children's School for Negro children was conducted for a long time by John House of the Presbyterian Church. At that time, about 1811, Negroes were numerous in our village. Mr. House acted as Superintendent of this Sabbath school. He also cared for the fires and the rooms which were said to be on Middle Street near the 1952 Catlin home.

WATERFORD'S FIRST KINDERGARTEN was opened on September 26, 1875. It was located on Second Street and was conducted by a Miss Hall. She advertised it as a children's "garden."

Our educators of the early 1800's possessed a certain sobriety. It is reasonable to assume that a person capable of teaching the languages, mathematics, geography, English and grammar merited the title of teacher.

Not so in Lansingburg. When a certain school needed such an instructor, the Principal merely advertised for an Usher. This indicated America's parentage, for it is a British word.

A school certificate dated 1838 shows Waterford's first School Inspectors to be Lysander Button, John P. Higgins and George D. Scott. These inspectors certified that one William W. Day was able to instruct a common school for one year from November 14, 1838. In 1839 Day contracted with Trustees Hind, Lamb and Seymour for certain money and an assistant to teach 232 pupils, at a school whose location is unknown.

In retrospect it may be said that the success of the Waterford Academy and other private institutions of learning in Waterford, gave birth to our first Public Schools.



WATERFORD'S FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL, as distinguished from the foregoing 1812 District School, was built in 1849. It was located at the northeast corner of Fourth and Division Streets and cost \$15,000.00. It was a brick building, with three floors and three teachers for each floor. The classes were not graded, the pupils of all ages reciting together. Graduating classes were rare, since many pupils left before graduation to finish their education in one of Waterford's six private schools.

The first recorded graduates were Minerva F. Michel, Anna J. Sheridan and Bertha Ashley, the latter probably the daughter of Superintendent Ashley then in charge of schools. They were graduated at the Town Hall on July 1, 1884. President of the School Board Dr. Chauncey Boughton stated that they had "completed their course, and had passed satisfactory examinations."

Salary rates were low in 1867, the Principal getting \$775.00 per annum besides teaching part-time. In 1886 the average per annum rate for teachers averaged \$350.00, while the Principal, Mr. Cobb, received \$1200.00. In 1887 the school had 737 pupils and sometime later Truant Officers began to patrol the streets for absentees.

This first public school was greatly enlarged and improved in 1870 at which time Pres. Boughton recommended that "this Board take steps to put ourselves under the Regents of the University." This Waterford "Union" School was thus admitted to the Regents on June 2, 1871, organized as of May 2, 1864.<sup>10</sup> In 1875 Mr. Gross of Peebles Island asked permission for the children of that place to be allowed to come to this school No. 1 and pay for tuition. The Board directed that Mr. Peebles be seen. "Does he want his Island in this District?" The Island formally requested on May 1, 1888 to join the district and on July 3, 1888 was admitted. On December 2, 1884, the studies of physiology and hygiene were added to the Waterford Schools.

About this time the crowding of the schoolrooms engaged the attention of the authorities. The school had neither enough room nor teachers. For temporary relief an extra schoolteacher and room were engaged for sessions at the corner of Broad and Third Streets with 35 to 40 pupils in attendance.

<sup>10</sup> *Hist. Records*, Un. State of New York, F. B. Hough, 1885, p. 722.

In the assembly system then in vogue, as many as 240 pupils were present in one large room, while as the Superintendent stated, the grade room system in the cities provided for only 40-45 pupils in each room with greater educational efficiency. The teaching force was then raised from 14 to 17, to care for the 737 scholars present in 1889.

During this time the Waterford school system was composed of three schools, No. 1 at Fourth and Division, No. 2 at Dodgeville or Northside with School No. 3 at Dial City.

Dial City had a small, one-story Public School located at the corner between the junction of South and Mohawk Streets. It had five grades after which the pupils entered School No. 1. Sarah E. Thurber was the last teacher and taught there until the school was closed in 1891. During this time the mystic sun "Dial" of 1846 had disappeared from the "city," although a new one had been promised in 1886.<sup>11</sup>

Dial City (its main street opened in 1846) was a wayward place before the days of 1860. This could be expected, since accounts say it did not "mature" until well after the Civil War. Its boys were tough. The author saw a group of its youth, (after raiding "Dicky" Palmateer's Northside peach orchard) coolly jump into the Champlain canal, clothes, shoes and all, and swim away, at just the moment when that outraged owner supposed that he had them "cornered" on a nearby cliff. Poor Miss Sarah Thurber deserved a Congressional Medal too for trying to teach in that den. Its pupils were declared "ungovernable" after Sarah had suffered a nervous illness. Following a miscreant night raid on the school, its closing was recommended. But, after recovery that brave woman returned to govern those three rooms in Hades (two were dressing rooms) until 1891, when the school was discontinued.

Its first martyr teacher was a Miss Wheeler who, we suppose, went to an early grave for the cause of education.

**WATERFORD UNION SCHOOL.** On July 18, 1888, the citizens of the No. 1 school district voted for a new site and school. The new school idea was defeated, 181 to 96.

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<sup>11</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, April 9, 1886.

On February 5, 1889 the school title was changed to Union Free School, District No. 1. On April 20, 1889, the public again voted, this time to issue bonds amounting to \$35,000.00 for a new school and site, with a new school promised for School No. 2 in Northside, as soon as needed. This time the vote was carried, 200 for and 110 against.

Two "school" lots were offered for sale. The first was on the site of the old Cemetery, at Fourth near Division, with 165 feet on Fourth and 198 feet in the direction of the canal. The price asked by the Trio Company for this lot was \$5,000.00 Mr. Munsion offered a second, 116 feet x 175 feet lot, on the "hill" at Sixth and Pine (or Division) streets, also for \$5,000.00. The residents voted on July 1, 1889 to erect the new school at its present (old Cemetery) site on Fourth Street by a vote of 270 for and 31 against.<sup>12</sup>

The New School No. 1 was completed and opened in September 1891. When done the third story of the building was not finished and the school had a total of sixteen rooms. In 1895 an additional \$2500.00 was raised by direct School tax to equip the third floor as a High School room, to which was added the sum raised from the sale of the Dial City school, together with the \$2750.00 received from John Meeker who bought the old discarded school at Division and Fourth streets.

The Village and Town had a great celebration at the laying of the new school's cornerstone on July 17, 1890. G. A. R. Post Philip H. Sheridan, the Knickerbacker Steamer Company and ten other divisions were in the parade. Rev. R. W. Beers gave the address of welcome and the Male Quartet for the occasion was composed of Waterford's Messrs. Bleibtry, Stone, Smith and Polhamus.

School No. 1 is now (65) years old, being the oldest continuously operated High School in New York State.

Waterfordians have always been proud of this fine, three-story brick building, and it has served the community well. The value of the education that this school has given us, our children, and citizens cannot be easily measured.

In 1954 it had 685 students and a graduating class of forty-one.

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<sup>12</sup> School No. 1 Record Book, 1883.



Professor Charles Field was then Superintendent of the Waterford Public School system, which besides Waterford School No. 1 includes the Waterford High School and School No. 2 in the Northside. Guiding the education of these several hundred students, beside the Superintendent, are (36) teachers, two principals, one grade supervisor, and one high school guidance counselor. In 1955 Charles M. Fitzpatrick is successor to Charles Field, in charge of the Waterford Public School System.

In present school practices, grades are obtained periodically by combining two-thirds of the daily classwork rating, with one-third of the mark earned on examinations.

As we occasionally pass through these halls of learning, we are reminded of the rich legacy which grew from our country's traditional little red schoolhouse, for which, to most Americans, there is no substitute.

The author attended School No. 1 and enjoyed the whole experience. We have no recollection of poetry being on the curriculum, yet on one occasion some misguided students achieved what they regarded as a masterpiece.

A towering, giant, new superintendent had taken over the school and his discipline was devastating. This Civil War veteran advancing to Waterford from a small town in the north, was mowing down all the tough boys with sheer muscular prowess. Those were not the sissy days when the law stepped in if someone bumped you for wrongdoing. To see this giant take even the largest offender by the collar, drag him from his desk and shake him loose was a sight. The offender looked as flexible as a string, ripples flowing through his body as this powerful man shook him.

Then our education began to work. We had been taught that the pen was mightier than the sword but until now, these were nothing but fine words. Unable to lick this giant, the situation called for an alternative.

The scholars now poetical, went into conference. They emerged with—

"The American Eagle, he flew south  
With Bill F——r in his mouth  
When he saw he had—a fool  
He dropped him at the Waterford School."

No doubt even the toughest scholar if now alive regrets this abuse of that Superintendent. He was a fine man, a veteran, and a true American. What he handed out to unruly scholars was truly merited and it made us all better citizens. There is no substitute for the jewel of education and it is strange that our bodies had to be shaken so roughly to make room for even a small bit of it.

### THE HALFMOON ACADEMY

Should auld acquaintance be forgot? We cannot close this chapter on education without mentioning our friends and neighbors of Halfmoon who shared with us that historic name while we worked together in the youthful days of our nation. Do the Halfmoon people know that the lost records of the "Halfmoon Academy" intrigue the interest of the New York State Department of Education? A local historian, calling upon elderly Halfmooners has recently finished a five years futile search for Halfmoon Academy's missing books or papers. We still hope for their recovery. Many prominent Halfmoon people were educated in this institution and the only surviving record follows.

#### HALFMOON ACADEMY

Incorporated by the Regents, February 14, 1851 but it may have served unofficially years before this date.

##### *Principals*

E. W. Capron, A.B. ....	1850-1851	Maston L. Ferris .....	1870-1871
Samuel Hall, A.M. ....	1855-1856	William H. Wing .....	1872-1873
Silas Smith, A.M. ....	1852-1854	Rev. R. Davis .....	1874-

##### CIVIL WAR

Rev. F. N. Barlow .....	1864-1866	Anna Smith .....	1875-
Charles F. Brockway .....	1867-1869	Emma Moody .....	1876-

#### HALFMOON ACADEMY

The Academy was discontinued about 1880 and by an Act of the New York Legislature (Act 124, Laws of 1859) the stockholders were allowed to sell their property and after paying debts, to divide the remainder among said stockholders.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Historical Records*, University State of N. Y., F. B. Hough, 1885, p. 636.

## THE BRIGGS SCHOOL

The Briggs Public School in the Town of Halfmoon is located on the east side of the Hudson River Road  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles from Waterford, near the Barge Canal Locks. It started in January 1949 with twenty-five enrolled pupils.

Trustees Franklin Van Orden and Charles Morse were in office when the Briggs building was purchased. In 1952 the enrollment was so increased that it became necessary to employ a second teacher and use the basement as a classroom. A permanent classroom will be added to the school in 1957.

After the pupils graduate from the Briggs School they enter the Waterford High School. The present school Trustees are Mr. Charles Morse, Mr. John Connally, and Mr. Howard French. The teachers are Mrs. Catherine Bly and Mrs. Irene Putnam.<sup>14</sup>

The Briggs School succeeded the little Red School on old "School-house Lane." Rippling beside the old school was the ancient Muder Kill creek, notable in earliest Albany records and shown on ancient Waterford maps. Halfway between the Muder Kill and the new Briggs school were the "Riffs," the Revolutionary landing place for the Hudson River battoes in use during Colonial and Revolutionary days.

The little red brick building was the typical country school that in the past had meant so much to growing America. It was probably built about 1880 on land said to have been donated by John Clute.

Among its early trustees were Herman J. Weber, John Van Voorhees, and Alvah Bell.

Herman Weber was also School Tax Collector and his son Harold M. Weber, Sr. was the school's fire builder and janitor at a salary of \$2.00 per month. He also visited the farms and homes and collected the school taxes for his father. These earlier customs are refreshing when compared with the polished school days of 1956.

Some of the later Trustees were Alvin Laing, Carl Tobler, and Alfred Whitehurst.

Some of the teachers who taught in the old school were Mrs. Versa Knoll Hammersley, Miss May Loveland, Mrs. Agnes Pahl,

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<sup>14</sup> Data, partly contributed by Brigg's faculty member, Mrs. Catherine Bly.



Mrs. Dorothy Poole, Mrs. Agnes Ablett, Mrs. Ralph Lewis, and Mrs. Rose Gamble. The last teacher in the old school of September 1948 was Mrs. Leah Bennett, who continued her work in the Briggs School to January 1949.

Happy school days were associated with the little red brick school on the lane. Nearby were nice open fields where one 1929 teacher for example, Mrs. Versa Knoll Hammersley, joined her scholars in noontime baseball games. On the last day of the summer session the pupils, the teacher and friends would celebrate with a picnic held in pretty nearby "Slade's Hollow." With the advent of Christmas old Santa Claus would visit the school and help in the joyous entertainment.

Recently the old school was torn down and the land sold to the National Auto Fibres Company.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

### SLAVERY IN WATERFORD

SLAVERY existed in Waterford, even as our first churches were being organized. These unfortunates first came to our shores in the West India Company's slave ship in 1647. They were sold for peas and pork.<sup>1</sup> Holland's statesmen tried in vain to stop this practice. But New York State looked easily upon it, and had upon its books a law providing the death penalty for runaway slaves found forty miles north of Albany. Some of Waterford's larger homes, including the General Samuel Stewart place at Broad and First Streets, had slave quarters in the basement with bricked ovens for cooking. The daughter of one of these slaves is described as being all that was excellent in an old family servant of the past. An old paper says that her father worked overtime for Jacobus Van Schoonhoven and with the money thus earned, purchased the freedom of the slave's mother. Twenty-eight years before the Civil War broke out, Waterford hated slavery. In August of 1833<sup>2</sup> its "Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society" appeared, taking the formal name of the "American Colonization Society." The society was engaged in "wiping out" slavery and its slogan said that \$30.00 would send a Negro back to his land of "African freedom." Kindness or even good intentions were dimmed as we read of the separation of Negro mothers and children, such as the advertisement "For Sale: an active, lively, Negro wench: a female child will be sold with her or not, as suits the purchaser."<sup>3</sup> The final atonement for this violation was cited by Lincoln<sup>4</sup> "Until every drop of blood, drawn by the lash (of slavery) shall be paid by another, drawn by the sword."

The end of New York's slavery in 1827 was due more to our

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1 *Halfmoon Series Book*, New York State Library (974.71 H16).

2 *Waterford Atlas*, August 28, 1833.

3 *Lansingburg Gazette*, June-July 1803.

4 *Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address*.

uncongenial climate and the wrong kind of work, rather than to any phase of our theology or humanity.<sup>5</sup>

New York took a step in the right direction in 1799 when a bill was passed freeing all children born in slavery.

Waterford once had a number of Negroes and we remember them as being among our best citizens and an integral part of our town fellowship.

Older Waterfordians will recall our sturdy and triumphant "Rough Rider" football team of the 1900's and its two Negro Epps boys.

These young Negroes were proud of their solid alliance with their white teammates and were outstanding players. Frequently a brilliant play by one of these Negro boys would anger the opposing team and bring on total warfare.

We still recall Waterford's exultation as the entire Rough Riders then battled the opponent team. They gave muscular objection to the studied rough treatment accorded our Negro players.

#### GENERAL LAFAYETTE'S VISIT

A granddaughter of General Samuel Stewart brings us the story of General Lafayette's "memorable" drive from Bemis Heights through Waterford, presumably during the time of his visit to Troy on July 1, 1825.

A tiny girl Eunice Payne, waved a small American flag in honor of the passing General as she stood on the porch of the Lion Tavern at the corner of First and Broad Streets.

Benjamin Hawley Payne from Fort Miller was the proprietor of that Inn, and his daughter Eunice was then six or seven years old. Eunice, became the mother of Waterford's Mrs. Benjamin P. Burton.

The latter, who contributed this data (to Mrs. John D. Sherer), says her other grandfather bought the old General Stewart home, the General and his wife then moving to the Eagle Tavern where they both died.

Further news concerning the old "Eagle" comes from the same source. General Stewart after his purchase, converted the Eagle Inn into what is described as a comfortable home loved so dearly by the later owners, the Burtons.

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<sup>5</sup> *Chronology of American History*, Krull.



Thus these two Revolutionary gathering-places are finally referred to by an old resident who says in closing that the Lion Tavern was later owned by Stephen Titcomb, the father of John Titcomb, Mrs. Schouten and Mrs. Snyder.

General Lafayette had started his journey from Boston and made a tour of New England to Burlington, Vermont. Leaving Burlington he went to Schuylerville and thence to Bemis Heights, where he was conducted over the Saratoga battlefield by the grandson of General Philip Schuyler. Late on the evening of June 30, 1825 he reached Waterford where he passed the night. The next morning, attended by a large escort of Waterfordians he crossed the Union Bridge, making a brief call at residence of the Rev. Samuel Blatchford before going to the "Troy House" for breakfast.

#### WATERFORD'S WORKING MEN

From Waterford came many able workers and mechanics. Their unusual achievements of the 1800's recalls the statement of Benjamin Franklin, made in 1766, "I know of no article that Americans cannot make themselves, or do without."<sup>6</sup>

Early records indicate that as many as fifty different articles were made here, apart from the work done in the flour-mills, the knitting-mills and the cooperage shops. Waterford's newcomers departing from New England, left behind poor soil and a bad climate. But it had made them a thrifty people, shrewd and calculating. These new arrivals were lumped together as "Yankees" and added much to our early prosperity. One fact, a bit hazy in our land of 1955, was then borne in mind by both workers and employers. They realized that they needed each other. One early Waterford lecturer said we had "forty small buildings, used as shops of mechanics, or offices." We also had "Mechanics Row."<sup>7</sup>

America owes much to its mechanics, and their work. Some such "all around" men, (not specialists) can be given a crude steel forging and a complicated blueprint. From the latter they will produce an intricate unit, smooth as glass and accurate within the thousandth part of an inch.

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<sup>6</sup> *History of American Life*, Schlesinger & Fox.

<sup>7</sup> Charles H. Quandt, Waterford.

The president of a large establishment, making fine optical instruments, during World War II, asked this author to tell his factory workers how well they were doing on a much-needed war unit, until then made by Zeiss in Germany. So a few words of truth and appreciation were given to the hundreds of assembled men. The next day the president phoned the speaker, saying, "Gosh Major, that shop get-together was a mistake; I've received twenty-one requests for raises in pay."

The relation of men, to each other, and from boss to worker in the year 1832 was just about the same as in 1955. What was in each man's heart and character determined how they dealt with each other.

Waterford then had a number of learned and professional men. Some of these were altruistic and gave some of their time to provide, at night classes, higher education for poorer people who lacked it.

Their efforts of nearly a century and a quarter ago, before the Waterford Lyceum, the Rhetorical Association and the Mechanics Debating Society are still not forgotten, for who can measure the longevity of a good deed?

We became intrigued by these printed incidents and examined the personal lives of two of these leaders. One was a busy physician and the other an equally active fire-engine manufacturer. Both were successful in business and both were leaders in their churches.

We had too in Waterford a man of the opposite class, a man born of wealthy parents and even benevolently inclined when the spirit moved. For him however, mankind followed the pattern of the brilliant Hamilton, who in 1791 said, "Communities divide themselves into the few and the many; the few are rich and well-born; the others are the mass of the people. The people are turbulent and changing. They seldom judge or determine right. Give to the first class a permanent share in the government; they will check the boisterousness of the second." This Waterford manufacturer ran his factory exactly in that fashion. He was rigidly arbitrary, and stifled the wills of all his employees.

His outlook on life is best expressed by the following incident observed at his plant. An office worker, permitted to talk to the great man, remarked something about a lady, just then passing by.

The manufacturer glanced through the window, and recognizing her identity said, "She is not a lady; she has neither wealth or property." But, like the rich man (in Lazarus) he died. He left a large fortune, but his name is rarely mentioned. So that between these two classes of men, the benevolent and the egoist, it does seem that good deeds never die, and that virtue still has its own reward.

Education changes men's lives. As we contemplate some later incidents among Waterford's working men, we cannot declare whether their action came about because of the uplift efforts of the doctor or the fire-engine man, or was due to the normal advance in the general lot of men. Probably it was due partly to each.

On September 15, 1832, not long after the "uplift lectures," the "Mechanics of the Village" called a meeting to be held in the old Revolutionary tavern, the Eagle. They were to discuss the matter of working evenings, and they soon decided that the custom was wrong. In consequence, their committee of seven resolved, "To work sunup to sunset until 20th March 1833, then to adopt the ten-hour system."

No doubt the mechanics meeting in that 1776 tavern renewed within themselves the wild spirit of those earlier days for they soon after decided to learn more about the mysteries of politics. What better place than the Political Convention at Saratoga?

There a number went and were rewarded by reading in the *Waterford Union* of September 16, 1832, "that a number of Waterford mechanics went to the Saratoga County Convention and were called filthy and runaway renegades by the haughty aristocrats of Waterford." (end quote)

In this slow and painful manner did our working men climb the ladder of labor experience, culminating in an astounding national difference in the year 1956.

The Waterford men were many years too early in other ventures. On May 22, 1833 the "Working Men of the village, established a Co-operative Store for the benefit of the Laboring Class of the Community." Stock was sold throughout the village to conduct the venture. The leaders of this enterprise were Esquire Abel Look, with F. A. Humphrey as Chairman and John R. Walker as Secretary.



Somewhat later a "Working Men's Union" was established. It held meetings over what is in 1955, the Lewis H. Van Arnum hardware store. No liquor was allowed on the premises, with the rooms opened from 6 to 10 p.m. with free books and magazines being furnished.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, Dec. 24, 1884.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

### THE CHURCHES OF WATERFORD

WE WATERFORDIANS are greatly indebted to our churches and the many clergymen who have faithfully served us since early days.

America was founded upon Christian precepts and these disciples have carried on the good work. Our founding fathers placed their trust in God and were preserved in a new and an almost barren country. The forest people who first occupied the land became the friends of the Pilgrims and taught the newcomers how to grow food.

These New Englanders founded our first Thanksgiving (Governor Bradford, 1621) and left us many noble legacies. Even our currency silently reminds us of the faith of our fathers. "In God We Trust" on our coins, and the symbolical eye of God looking down from the Great Seal of the United States on our dollar bills, are things we overlook, yet should be viewed with pride.

It was not our great might either, that won us the War of Independence. We were unprepared too, for all our foreign wars, yet in a way, won them all.

This is more than a coincidence. We win when we are on God's side. We are gifted too, with many blessings. Americans often forget that we have never experienced a famine, while millions of people in other parts of the world are hungry each night. Communism might have been thwarted in its earlier days had we, the "Christian nations," then applied to poorer people, some of the altruism which now in 1955 has become almost a forced and expensive international task.

There is a God, and religion really works. We accept all the blessings of life without considering the source. Wise is the man who daily remembers and thanks God, for all His gifts.

Our first area inhabitants followed the religious habits of the New Englanders. They were almost unsophisticated, natural and

simple. We moderns only get religious when we are afraid of fires, floods or wars or are about to cross the great divide.

We habitually make fun of the old "blue laws" and forget quite easily that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

This author here affirms his trust and belief in Almighty God, and tenders his respect to the people of Lansingburg who in 1798, meeting as they said, "In a large and respectable number," met in a public session, for an upward look.

They were headed by Jacob Vanderheyden and they passed the "Act for Suppressing Immorality, because deploring this awful prevalence of immorality and fearing the judgment of heaven, passed this act to suppress evils."

Their decree prohibited (quote)—

"The selling strong or spirituous liquors, ale or porter, on the first day of the week (called Sunday), is forbidden.—there shall be no traveling,—except going to church, within 20 miles, or to call a surgeon or midwife,—there shall be no working (except works of necessity or charity), shooting, fishing or tippling horses, nor shall there be exposed articles for sale, (except small meat, milk or fish,) on the first day of week. Penalty, ages 14 and up six shillings. The penalty for selling; the goods sold and given to the use of the poor, and offender in STICKS, for two hours."<sup>1</sup>

For sheer loyalty to their area church and religion, we give top place to the nearby Palatines who founded the little settlement, first called the "Hosek" Road, and later Center Brunswick. This place was founded by these 1706-1712 immigrants from the Livingston Manor, who after service with the British Colonial forces in Canada, in 1711, settled on the "Hosek" Road. Here they founded the historical Gilead Lutheran Church before 1742.<sup>2</sup>

During one of its "no pastor" periods, the grandchildren of a Mrs. Jacob Brust, and the descendants of Catherine Clum<sup>3</sup> (later Cropsey),<sup>4</sup> recall hearing these older people telling how they and

<sup>1</sup> *Lansingburg Gazette*.

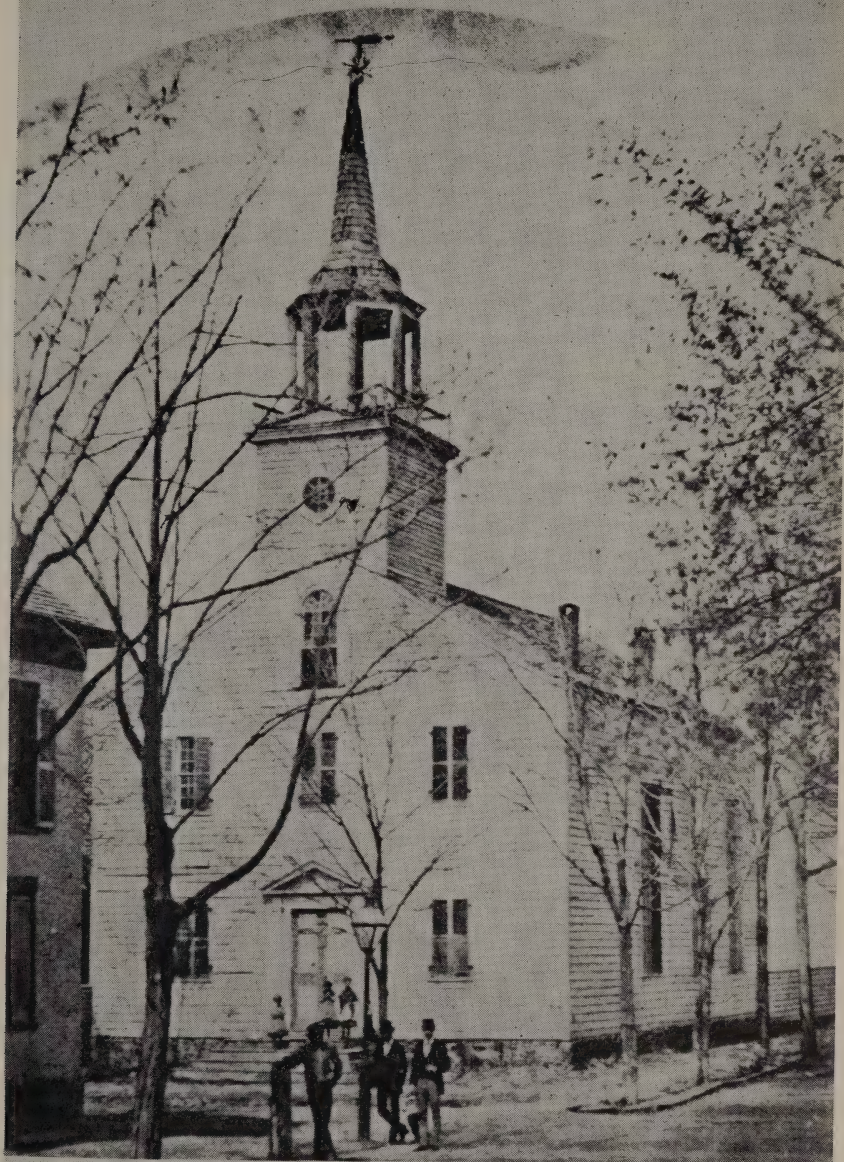
<sup>2</sup> *Gilead Church History*, Rev. J. A. Barnett, 1881, p. 13 (Loan of Mrs. Elsie M. Roberts of Pleasantdale).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> From this pre-revolutionary settlement of "Hosek" many small hamlets received their place names. From the name Clum, came Clum's Corners—Havners-



THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH 1799



The Mother Church - Waterford.  
1799





their neighbors walked 14 miles to Albany to hear the preaching of the gospel. In the days before 1797, the churches were not heated. An ancient, Jonas Smith, remembers his mother telling of carrying her children a distance of three miles, through snow and cold to that unheated church. Here the services lasted almost the entire day. Once, in mid-winter, fourteen babies were baptised, who with their parents, remained throughout the long services. At this old church Maria Rensselaer Gordinier was baptised in 1789 with Patron Stephen Van Rensselaer and wife as sponsors. Then at the same church, on February 15, 1790 there came the future President of the United States, Martin Van Buren with his wife Maria "sponsoring" their first child, Maria at her baptism.

Men from this "Hosek" settlement were caught by the war of 1776. One walking home on furlough from the American army, and finding his family missing, started to look for them at Lansingburg, only to be caught by Tories and hung near Bald or Rafinesque Mountain.

### THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH OF WATERFORD

It was a bit of rare luck to have a kind neighbor give us a picture of this first known Waterford Church after it had been moved into the village in 1799 from its site on the "Great" or Hudson River Road.

On the picture are penned the words, "The Mother Church" which according to local tradition is correct. It was the worshipping place of the Dutch people who founded this area. The date of its original erection is believed to be well before the Revolution. The religious Dutch people were here a century before that war and they doubtless had a still earlier meeting place, unless the fear of Canadian Indian raids prevented this. The church, as we know it, was first located 1 6/10 miles from Broad Street on the west side of the Mechanicville Road.

Its exact spot was pointed out to a very old resident almost a  
ville, from Johan Hayner and Deacon Hayner's Tavern. Cropseyville came from Clum and Cropsey, and Platestown later named Tamarack, followed a store kept by Conrad Hayner and Peter Loose.

The present township of Brunswick was first called "Hosek" Road, then Feilstown, Elizabethtown, and then Troytown, before finally assuming the final name of Brunswick.



century ago. It was close to the roadside, a bit north of the 1955 Grand Union storehouse on the old Devitt farm. Near it was the old cemetery or "church yard." The first pastor of whom we know was the Rev. Jonas Coe and the next was the Rev. John Close, who preached there in 1797.

This ancient church operated under the Synod of Dordrecht and one of its Sabbath day "musts" was the teaching of the Heidelbergh Catechism. We have this Waterford Church's Dutch Testament and Psalm book of 1720 having metal rings to fasten it to the church pews.

By 1790 the Dutch Reformed Church had been gradually weakened by the Anglicizing of its Dutch stock and it became necessary to provide sermons in English.

By this time too, the Halfmoon settlement on that old Hudson River highway had begun to move to Halfmoon Point. Dwindling congregations, due to intermarriage, doubtless caused the removal of this Dutch church from its first Halfmoon home to Waterford's growing village center.

In the year 1797<sup>5</sup> it was moved piece by piece to Lot No. 167 on the south-west corner of Middle at 22 Third Street. Just south of the old church was the brick Parsonage which is still standing and occupied as a residence by the family of the late Henry V. Button at No. 20 Third St.

In 1874 this old Dutch Church was said to have been struck by lightning and partly burned. It was torn down in 1876.<sup>6</sup> Its cornerstone was fortunately preserved and is part of the foundation of the residence owned in 1955 by Miss A. Marian Button, resting upon the exact site of the old church, at No. 22 Third St.

Its last Consistory was composed of Robert Moe—Lawrence Vanderwerken, W. G Van Denberg—and Simon Vischer, (Elders) and H. W. Ten Broeck and H. Westfall (Deacons). The Hon. C. A. Waldron was Moderator of the Call and the last known Minister, the Rev. Rutger Van Brunt.

It was truly the "Mother" church of Waterford. It became the church home of the Presbyterian people for twenty-one years begin-

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<sup>5</sup> *The Manual*, Waterford Presbyterian Church, 1876, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *The Waterford Advertiser*, May 21, 1886.

ning 1804, the Dutch pastor becoming ill shortly after the church was moved in 1799.

Not only did the Presbyterians share the old church but the Methodist, Baptist and Episcopal congregations did also.

These groups used the Dutch Church at different hours for their services and until they built structures of their own or used old Classic Hall on First Street, this was really a temple of worship.

### FIRST WATERFORD METHODIST CHURCH

On Sunday April 1, 1802 Zadok King, his wife Thankful (Mitchell) and nine children arrived in Waterford from Coldrain, Massachusetts. Waterford's first history states that no family ever came to this village which exercised so long and great an influence in all its interests, religious, business life or social affairs, than this King family. The parents were eminently religious people, the father a Baptist and the mother a Methodist. The two were strongly united in their religious beliefs and soon after their arrival, opened their home on South Street and began public prayer meetings. At that time these prayer meetings were the sterling marks of Methodism. The advent of the Kings proved to be the seed of Methodism in Waterford. (Thankful M. King's gravestone in 1955 adorns the sidewalk near the corner of Fifth and Middle Streets.)

Soon public interest grew and in 1803, a Methodist Class was formed. Beyond the occasional visit of an itinerant preacher or "Circuit Rider," services were conducted in this modest way, at an unknown place. In 1820 regular preaching by a Methodist minister began. His name may be either Rev. H. B. Hibbard or Rev. Mr. Ferguson, whose names first appear in the public records. We are indebted to Warden John Vibbard of Grace Episcopal Church, who long years ago gave the facts concerning the first Methodist place of worship.

Warden Vibbard reported that on July 11, 1811 he had bought the Methodist Meeting House, which after expensive revisions, the Episcopalians used for worship until 1841.<sup>7</sup>

Until 1825 the Methodists also used with the other congregations The Dutch Church on "Church" or Third Street until members

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<sup>7</sup> From Grace Episcopal Church Records.

of the Dutch Church considered reviving their own church membership. Then until the present church site was purchased prior to 1831, the Methodists worshipped in "Classic" Hall.

About 1831 a new Methodist church building was started, and dedicated on June 13, 1832. On March 30, 1834 the new church was incorporated, its first trustees being John Fuller King, Foster King, James Hale, Ezekiel Whitney, Wm. Brockway and Henry Edson.

The Methodists are now in their third building, counting the "Meeting House" sold to the Episcopalians in 1811. The picture of the 1832 church taken by Nelson Mitchell, is shown in this book. The first parsonage which accompanied it was built in 1847 and being outmoded in 1895 was sold and is still acting as a Second street residence.

Waterford Methodism in its first days was connected religiously with both Lansingburg and Cohoes. It shared with these places the same preacher until 1840.

During the pastorate of Rev. William H. Groat in 1894-1895, the 1832 church was removed and the present (1955) brick-veneered church building erected. In the year 1892 the church had 176 members and 210 Sunday School members. The parsonage used in 1955 was erected under the pastorate of Rev. G. M. Moody about 1901-1905.

About the year 1912 a violent and sustained windstorm damaged the church building especially at the east end. The repairs were costly. Kind aid was given the Methodists by all the Waterford churches during the reconstruction.

In 1937 the church and parsonage were given a complete renovation under the Rev. John A. Lavender at a cost of \$7000.00.<sup>8</sup> At this time the church tower was removed.

In 1951 oil heat was installed and probably for the first time, complete warmth and comfort was enjoyed. A little later the Primary Department was modernized and a new church roof put on. In 1955 the church sanctuary was newly painted and other repairs accomplished. At this time 368 church members were upon the rolls with 200 on the Church school rolls. In Methodist days of 1803,

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<sup>8</sup> First Methodist Church Records.



THE FIRST WATERFORD METHODIST CHURCH



ERECTED IN 1832- DEMOLISHED IN 1894



Circuit Riders were our preachers. They came on horseback, preached, and were on their way again.

Our preachers since seem to have followed in their train. Sixty have been recorded in 122 years. The length of their local service has averaged but two years.

## LIST OF METHODIST PASTORS

IN 1833 OR 1835

The Revs. H. B. Hibbard or Ferguson

Revs. Landan and T. Benedict

Revs. H. Stead and Cyrus Prindle

Revs. Wright Hazen, Crawford and P. H. Green

Rev. Oliver Emerson	1840-1842	Rev. J. M. Edgerton	1881-1882
Rev. Benjamin Pomeroy	1842-1844	Rev. T. G. Thompson	1882-1884
Revs. Thomas Armitage		Rev. M. B. Mead	1884-1885
and Gardner S. Tubbs	1844-1845	Rev. W. W. Cox	1885-1888
Rev. C. R. Morris	1845-1847	Rev. E. J. Guernsey	1888-1891
Rev. J. M. Weaver	1847-1849	Rev. W. H. Groat	1891-1896
Rev. J. Quinlan	1849-1850	Rev. F. Lowndes	1896-1899
Rev. S. L. Stillman	1850-1851	Rev. J. J. Noe	1899-1901
Revs. W. Stone and		Rev. G. M. Moody	1901-1905
F. Chichester	1851-1852	Rev. E. C. Farwell	1905-1908
Rev. P. M. Hichcock	1852-1854	Rev. J. L. Atwell	1908-1910
Rev. G. S. Gould	1854-1855	Rev. H. A. Barton	1910-1912
Rev. L. A. Sanford	1855-1856	Rev. C. Edwards	1912-1915
Rev. A. McGilton	1856-1858	Rev. W. W. Foster, Jr.	1915-1918
Rev. N. G. Axtell	1858-1860	Rev. G. H. Pettingell	1918-1919
Rev. O. J. Squires	1860-1862	Rev. J. C. Booth	1919-1922
Rev. A. Canol	1862-1864	Rev. A. B. Potter	1922-1923
Rev. E. Stover	1864-1865	Rev. W. H. Flouton	1923-1927
Rev. H. C. Sexton	1865-1867	Rev. H. W. Magee	1927-1930
Rev. H. C. Farrar	1867-1869	Rev. J. H. Keep	1930-1935
Rev. S. W. Brown	1869-1871	Rev. J. A. Lavender	1935-1941
Rev. J. W. Carhart	1871-1872	Rev. William Perry	1941-1945
Rev. D. B. McKenzie	1872-1873	Rev. H. Allen Cooper	1946-1947
Rev. H. L. Starks	1873-1876	Rev. Fred. B. Jones	1947-1950
Rev. T. D. Walker	1876-1878	Rev. Elmer E. Benn	1950-1951
Rev. W. P. Rulison	1878-1880	Rev. Joel W. Shippey	1951-1957
Rev. W. H. L. Starks	1880-1881	Rev. P. J. Lambert, B.A., B.D.	1957



## THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Presbyterian church was organized on April 12, 1804<sup>9</sup> and then united with the Presbyterians of Lansingburg. It shared with them the joint pastorate of Dr. Samuel Blatchford.

The Waterford Reformed church, then without a pastor, placed their building at the disposal of the Presbyterians, who used it jointly for twenty-one years, until the Dutch desired to have a separate organization and pastor.

Then for several months, beginning in Jan. 1826 with Dr. Blatchford preaching, they worshipped in Classic Hall. In September of 1826, having purchased a lot from J. F. King they completed and dedicated their first church edifice. Just previous to the death of Dr. Blatchford, the Lansingburg alliance was dissolved, since each church was now able to maintain its own pastor.

The original 1826 church with General Samuel Stewart as architect, was materially changed before its destruction by the flood of 1913. The "old-fashioned" low tower was removed and replaced by one over twice as high. The pulpit at the west end was changed to the east and the "all around" gallery removed.

The entire front and doors were also greatly changed. In 1865 the church building was remodeled and enlarged, a costly organ also being given by John Cramer. In 1897 the original plain windows were removed and replaced by eleven stained-glass windows. Fortunately these and the organ were salvaged before the building was felled in 1913.

In 1852 the church ladies<sup>10</sup> at the suggestion of Rev. Mr. Bulions purchased the "manse" or parsonage at the head of First Street. During the pastorate of Rev. Lewis H. Lee, (1853-1863) the old session-house was torn down and a new one, the gift of John House, was erected.

The winter of 1912-1913 was marked by hard freezes and not much snow. When in March of 1913 continued heavy rains found no lodgement in the snow or earth, the water rushed unrestrained into the Hudson and Mohawk rivers.

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<sup>9</sup> First century, Presbyterian Church, Waterford, 1804-1904, p. 12.

<sup>10</sup> Manual of the Presbyterian Church, Waterford, 1876, p. 6.

This resulted in unprecedented floods which sent these rivers over 28 feet above flood stage. The church then preparing for new heaters, was partly surrounded by water and undermined at its southwest foundations, which caused part of the building to fall. The State Fire Marshal ordered the remainder of the church torn down which was done.

The cornerstone of the new building, the latter of colonial design with Harvard brick, was laid on August 2, 1914. Prior to the erection of the new church it was discovered, (supporting a legend of earlier days, that here was once a glacial swamp) that the site beneath was composed almost of sand.<sup>10a</sup> In accordance with modern building methods, concrete piles were sunk along the new foundations.

The first service in the new edifice was held on Easter Sunday, April 4, 1915. The new church has sixty pews and with the galleries and other available space, should seat close to 530 people. The old church bell, bought in 1834 by the ladies was uninjured by its 1913 fall from the tower and after nearly a century and a quarter of service, still calls "Come to Church," on Sabbath days.

On May 2-9, 1954, the First Presbyterian Church observed its One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary, joined in this happy event by the church people of the town of Waterford. The Rev. Eugene C. Blake, D.D., L.H.D., and a former popular pastor, the Rev. Herbert Willenberg were guest speakers.

#### LIST OF PRESBYTERIAN PASTORS

Samuel Blatchford, D.D.	1804-1828	A. B. Riggs, D.D.	1876-1889
Ebenezer Cheever	1828-1830	Robert W. Beers	1890-1904
Reuben Smith	1831-1848	Robert S. Wightman	1907-1919
Alexander R. Bullions	1848-1853	George H. Feltus	1919-1928
Lewis H. Lee	1853-1863	Edward A. Loux	1928-1939
Arthur T. Pierson, D.D.	1863-1869	Herbert C. Willenberg	1940-1945
R. P. H. Vail, D.D.	1869-1876	Oliver J. Warren	1946-

#### GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF WATERFORD

Rev. Ammi Rogers of Ballston, a missionary in 1795, came to the Episcopalians of Waterford, without organizing a parish. Ami

<sup>10a</sup> Area Newspapers, 1914.

Rogers descended from the celebrated Martyr, John Rogers burned in 1554. He was followed by Revs. Wetmore Chase and Thatcher of the New York Diocese together with the Rev. David Butler of Troy who revived the work of the earlier missionaries.

The Parish was organized on Sept. 17, 1810. Richard Davis Jr. and John Vibbard were chosen as Wardens and Guert Van Schoonhoven, Henry Davis, Hezekiah Ketchum, James Meaker, Benjamin Chamberlain and William McDonald were the first Vestrymen.<sup>11</sup>

A lot was leased and the Methodist Meeting House which Episcopal Warden Vibbard had bought was materially changed and made ready for divine services. On August 30, 1813, Bishop Hobart consecrated the edifice known as Grace Church this name having been selected when the parish was organized.

Lay readers conducted services for four years assisted by Dr. Butler, Dr. Cyrus Stebbins, and Amos Glover Baldwin. Rev. Parker Adams was the first Rector coming to Waterford on May 20, 1814. In early days much real estate was leased rather than sold. Guert Van Schoonhoven later purchased the lease upon which the building stands and gave it to Grace Church. In 1909 many other land leases held by Grace Church as investments were sold.

On July 11, 1841 Waterford's greatest fire occurred. The fire began in a manufacturing building in the rear of west of the church and in a short time the first wooden Episcopal church was destroyed.<sup>12</sup> The congregation worshipped in the Presbyterian Session House until a new building was erected.

After 1841 a building of brick was erected and on October 26, 1864 it was extended and beautified. The enlargement was completed in 1867 and a new organ installed. While these building changes were in progress the congregation worshipped in the Reformed Dutch Church thereby helping gain for the latter edifice the title of "The Mother Church." All existing early churches once worshipped in the Dutch Church.

The year 1883 was another happy year for Grace Church when a handsome Chapel was erected through gifts from its parishioners.

In April of 1923 a chime of bells was installed in the tower of

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<sup>11</sup> From data by William H. Law, Senior Deacon, Grace Church.

<sup>12</sup> Report of Edward A. Wilkins, Fire of 1841.



the church, also the gift of a parishioner. Grace Church's history has been marked by the generosity of its members. Its records show the richness of their gifts, including several handsome memorials.

In 1929 by a substantial bequest, extensive alterations and improvements were made to the church property. The Daisy McCoy Clark Memorial Parish House was erected of red tapestry brick and the church proper covered with the same material. This provides a pleasing and a symmetrical church unit. Sunday School, guild meetings and large assemblies are held in the new Parish house which has a modern kitchen together with recreational facilities.

Grace Church has had several rectories, the last being No. 36 Third Street, being bought in 1928.

#### THE MISSIONARIES AND RECTORS OF GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Rev. Ammi Rogers—Rev. Wetmore—Rev. Thatcher—Rev. David Butler

Rev. Parker Adams	1814-1818	Rev. F. A. Shoup	1875-1877
" Benjamin Dorr	1820-1829	" Walter Thompson	1877-1883
" Orange Clark	1829-1833	" W. D. Maxon	1833-1887
" C. Stebbins D.D.	1833-1841	" W. Rollins Webb	1887-1889
" George B. Eastman	1841-1845	" Ch. F. Freeman	1889-1892
" Jacob B. Morss	1845-1848	" S. F. Street	1892-1897
" Edward F. Edwards	1848-1851	" John Mills Gilbert	1897-1900
" George B. Mauser	1851	" C. L. Sleight	1901-1908
" Joseph J. Nicholson	1852	" Ch. V. Kling D.D.	1898-1913
" R. S. Adams	1854-1858	" Th. Bellringer Jr.	1913-1919
" William Walsh	1858-1864	" C. O. S. Kearton	1919-1927
" Joseph Carey	1864-1868	" James T. Kerr	1928-1951
" G. W. Ferhuson	1868-1872	" P. Ph. B. Franklin	1951
" Ch. C. Lancaster	1872-1873	" Michael A. Lynch	1952
		" Leland Harrison	1957

The Rev. James T. Kerr came to Grace Church from Whitehall, N. Y. in February 1928, serving the church for the long period of twenty-three years and five months, resigning on July 1, 1951.

For his long and faithful service to the parish, the vestry unanimously elected him Rector Emeritus of Grace Church. After the short pastorate and sudden death of Rev. Franklin in 1951, the Rev. Michael A. Lynch became rector of Grace Episcopal Church on February 1, 1952. Father Lynch came from Sparta, New Jersey and

was welcomed to the church as its thirty-second pastor. Rev. Father David Huntington, retired rector of St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Church for 23 years in Mechanicville acted for a long time as Supply Rector of Grace Church.

### THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WATERFORD

To Revolutionary soldier Ezekiel Whitney the Baptist Church of Waterford owes its origin. Deacon Whitney crossed over the Mohawk Ford from which Waterford gets its name, and up the "Great Road" to fight in the battle of Saratoga. During his first march through our place there were but fourteen houses. Deacon Whitney settled here and taught school, also officiating at Baptist funerals when no ministers were present. Later for three years the meetings of the Baptist Society were held at his house. It is said that in 1812 most members of this group were from Lansingburg and in 1814 as the numbers had grown, the Waterford Baptist church was formed. Services were held at Classic Hall when a preacher could be obtained. Soon after 1818 Elder Wiley of Lansingburg Baptist church became their pastor. The certificate of incorporation of the<sup>13</sup> First Baptist Society was given on December 1, 1818 and at Classic Hall the following Trustees were elected on December 5, 1818—William Griffiths, Ezekiel Whitney, Roswell Herrick, Tunis Van DerWerken, Aaron Hodgman and Roger E. Evers. The constitution of the church was awarded by the Shaftsbury Association on October 10, 1821.<sup>14</sup>

Two prominent Waterford Baptists deserve mention here since they were the great-granddaughters of the church's founder, Ezekiel Whitney. They were Mrs. A. G. Peckham and Agnes E. Eddy who were the children of Baptist Deacon T. J. Eddy who gave the Baptists their church lot. Deacon Eddy was the son of Isaac Eddy who built the brick house at the northeast corner of Third Street, below the church.

On September 24, 1828 the Baptists symbolized a baptism at the Hudson riverside by Elder Lamb, similar to those recorded in

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<sup>13</sup> Book of Religious Societies Recorded Jan. 26, 1819, County Clerk Office Ballston.

<sup>14</sup> *History of Baptist Church*, Edward A. Wilkins, 1915, p. 4.

the gospel. Again during my early boyhood days I witnessed near the old Humphrey-Barker home, a multiple baptism of what was believed to be an out of town group, in the waters of the same old Hudson River. It was a very impressive service especially when one considers the scriptural account of these solemn rituals. Elder Wiley preached from 1818 until 1821. He was succeeded in 1822 by Elder Lamb, described as an honest and intelligent man. His health caused a leave of absence and Elder Caleb Green preached while he was in New York City. While away, Elder Lamb joined a fraternal group. This dissatisfied the Waterford Baptists and he was not welcome when he returned home. This caused a division in the church and a cessation of worship from 1835 to 1839. Prayer meetings were held, however, and Elder John Duncan preached for a time. Elder Green did not like the "split up" and "shaking the dust of Waterford from his feet," left for Lansingburg.

The place and the date of the building of the first church cannot be described but it was destroyed in the great fire of 1841. On October 24, 1842 the Waterford Baptist Society dedicated a new house of worship.

This building, thought to have been on the present church site, was remodeled in 1867. The pipe organ was installed and during the stay of Rev. Theodore Heisig, an addition to the chapel was made together with many other important changes and improvements. The handsome memorial windows were given by several prominent Baptists and church organizations, noted in Edward Wilkin's Baptist Church History.

From sources, other than the church history, the following Baptist records were found.—That the church was partly destroyed by fire September 1879 and rebuilt.<sup>15</sup> (Not in Wilkin's Baptist Church History).

The Rev. Emerson Andrews later A.B., and A.M. was the Pastor in 1843. He became a noted evangelist and was known throughout our country. He is buried in Saratoga Springs.

Rev. E. E. Chivers, pastor in 1870 commenced preaching at the

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<sup>15</sup> *Diary*, Laura Cramer Ormsby.



age of 14 years and when serving Waterford Baptist Church was but twenty years old.

#### LIST OF BAPTIST PASTORS

Elijah Wiley .....	1818	L. P. Judson .....	1865
John Lamb .....	1827	J. W. Ashton .....	1873
Caleb Green .....	1828	E. E. Chivers .....	1870
John Duncan .....	1839	A. G. Dunsford .....	1879
Henry H. Rouse .....	1840	Arthur Jones .....	1876
Marvin Eastwood .....	1841	John Greene .....	1879
Elder Andrews .....	1843	D. H. Cooper .....	1882
Elder Brand .....	1843	W. H. Main .....	1885
Elder Green .....	1843	Theodore Heisig .....	1888
Josiah Cannon .....	1844	J. A. Hansen .....	1891
John Burroughs .....	1847	J. A. Larcombe .....	1902
Benj. Garfield .....	1847	J. W. Huff .....	1910
John Harvey .....	1850	T. S. Leonard .....	1913
John Duncan .....	1852	Thomas A. Hughes .....	1923
Elijah Lucas .....	1853	Hale C. Cole .....	1928
W. Blackwell .....	1853	Alfred Scott .....	1929
Elder Carr .....	1854	Donald Tubbs .....	1935
Elder Baker .....	1854	A. C. Wentworth .....	1941
John LaGrange .....	1855	Lewis M. Blackmer .....	1943
D. Corwin .....	1857	Vernard L. Cossey .....	1943
Lewis Sellick .....	1858	G. J. Kneпка .....	1945
J. E. Cheshire .....	1861	Fred E. Blue .....	1952
H. S. Loyd .....	1862	John F. Madden .....	1954
J. L. Barlow .....	1864		

#### ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The first Mass of St. Mary's Church was held in Classic Hall on First Street in 1843. The Mass said by the Rev. William P. Hogan, then in charge of the Lansingburg Church.

In 1848 the first Roman Catholic Church of Waterford was erected at the northeast corner of Sixth and Division Streets.

It was of brick, being 48 feet wide by 95 feet long, and was built under the administration of Rev. Anthony Farley of Waterford and Lansingburg.

Father Michael J. Collins, O.S.A., improved the church in 1862-1863 and excavated for and added the Sunday School room. The seating capacity of the church was 300 and the membership 650. The

newspapers of that period state that a 150 foot tower and spire with a cross were to be added; also that a beautiful organ encased in mahogany was installed by Father Collins.

Next to the church was the two lot section which had been used by the Waterford Academy. Father Collins bought these lots from Mr. Gage for the enlargement of St. Mary's, and in due time the tower, spire and cross were erected, together with a sacristy, in 1864-1865.

In 1898 a terrific storm taking the form of a "twister" visited Waterford. On Peebles Island the primeval pines forming the village picnic grounds were blown down to the last tree. At this spot the wind came from the west, all the felled trees pointing eastward. An old picture of St. Mary's however, shows that its tower was pushed from the east direction and lay pointing to the west. Restoration of the damaged tower was made by the Rev. James Curran in 1899.

Father Curran was beloved by all the people of Waterford for he had an understanding heart and a deep affection for all people. It was a common and a good sight to see Father Curran frequently walking along our village streets, arm in arm with another clergyman.

The AUGUSTINIAN ORDER entered the Albany Diocese on April 11, 1858 and the Rev. George Meagher was appointed pastor of St. Mary's.

Father Meagher lived in Lansingburg. This followed a custom of all our churches since the earliest days. Our community was quite too small to have adequate buildings and clergy of its own. Lansingburg was a good neighbor and great things were accomplished by these joint communities.

The first Baptisms in Saint Mary's were conducted on May 9, 1859 by Father Meagher, O.S.A., the two being Mary Heffers and Helen Smith. Other baptisms about the same time bore the names, Kane, Gilligan, McCarron, Gittings, Gildea, Brennan, Cunningham and Gaynor.

The first Confirmation was administered by Bishop McCloskey on Nov. 4, 1858 to 51 boys and 70 girls. All their names indicate trouble across the ocean. Most of the newly confirmed boys and

girls were of Irish origin since Ireland had experienced severe potato famines starting in 1831. Up to 1842 its immigration to America greatly increased. Added to this was the building of our first Champlain and Erie canals soon after 1823.

The Irish folk were then greatly sought after in this and other manual tasks, this immigration undoubtedly adding to the population of our village. Among those baptized too, were others bearing Italian, French and German names.

Bishop McCloskey also held confirmation services again in 1861. The first marriage which took place after St. Mary's came under the Augustinian order was recorded under date of May 13, 1858. Then John Kane and Catherine Cody were united. The witness was Miss Rose Murphy and Father Meagher officiated. Other marriages of that significant year united William Dunnegan and Catherine Cahil together with Patrick Brown and Elizabeth Kane.

Father Michael J. Collins, O.S.A., wrote his name enduringly upon the records of St. Mary's Church. He not only served that Church for eight years but greatly improved the first edifice. In addition he bought from a Mr. Palmer the land for the Cemetery. On Aug. 1, 1868. He also put into effect proper rules for its deportment and upkeep.

The Cemetery was dedicated in 1869, and the first burial was that of Bernard Berney. Other burials in June of that year were Rosanna O'Neil, Joseph Owen, Anna Slavin, and Anna Maron, all of Waterford.

The constant growth of St. Mary's brought demands for a new church. On March 14, 1911 the plans for the present beautiful structure, of a variegated Gothic design, were approved. The church was two years in building and was blessed on November 23, 1913. The church has since grown and prospered, reflecting the wisdom of its founders. It has a seating capacity of 750 and a membership of 700 families.<sup>16</sup>

Its pastorate in 1953 included Rev. Francis A. Diehl, O.S.A., Pastor, Rev. John P. Hennessy, O.S.A., and Rev. Donald J. Ammering, O.S.A., who under Father Diehl contributed part of this data.

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<sup>16</sup> All St. Mary's Church date checked by the Rev. Father Ammering, O.S.A., 1953.



After the new church had been completed, old St. Mary's became the meeting place and recreational center for members of St. Mary's and others.

Plans were made in 1952 under Father Francis Diehl, for Waterford's first Parochial School. It is located on Division street north of new St. Mary's Church and cost about \$350,000.00

The program for the raising of the initial \$150,000.00 astonished the hesitant by the rapidity with which this sum was contributed. The campaign goal was \$150,000.00 whereas \$226,000.00 was received.

The corner stone of the new building was laid by Most Rev. Edmund F. Gibbons, the Bishop of Albany Diocese, on May 31, 1953 and the site blessed in September of 1953.

The school has eight grades and a kindergarten. It is conducted by the Sisters of Mercy who occupy the former rectory on Sixth Street which was completely renovated at a cost of \$35,000.00

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church of Waterford is recognized as belonging to the Albany Diocese and in charge of the Augustinian order. Those pastors following after the services of Fathers Hogan in 1843 and Farley in 1848 are:

1858, April 11, Father George A. Meagher, O.S.A., resided in Lansingburg; 1860, November, Father Edward M. Mullen, O.S.A., resided in Lansingburg; 1861, May, Father Michael J. Collins, O. S. A., resided in Lansingburg; 1877, January, Father John H. Devir, O. S. A., resided in Lansingburg; 1878, April, Father Daniel D. Regan, O. S. A., moved to Waterford Rectory in March 1880.

1880, December 31, Father John P. Gilmore, O. S. A.; 1890, July, Father John T. Emmett, O. S. A.; 1894, July, Father James P. Curran, O. S. A., died in office, Oct. 12, 1901; 1901, October, Father Alfred H. Valiquette, O. S. A.; 1918, June Father Daniel J. Sullivan, O. S. A.; 1922, June, Father Michael J. Fleming, O. S. A.; 1924, February, Father Daniel J. Leonard, O. S. A.; 1926, August, Father Henry T. Regan, O. S. A.; 1932, June, Father James H. Griffin, O. S. A.; 1938, June, Father Daniel A. Herron, O. S. A.; 1942, August, Father James R. Simpson, O. S. A.; 1950, June, Father Thomas Fogarty, O. S. A., died before he took office; 1950, July, Father Francis A. Diehl.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

### EARLY AND NOTED WATERFORDIANS

#### THE KINGS

THE COMING of the Kings was of great importance to the early history of Waterford. Their erection of the first water power canal and its accompanying two Mohawk dams in 1828, made work for hundreds of men and started many new industries.

These in turn gave unusual prosperity to Waterford and were indirectly responsible for the erection of twenty-six or more residences of the "Post Colonial" type. These once were considered elegant and then gave our place distinction.

This family noted for its longevity, came in April 1802 from Coldrain, Mass. The father was Zadok and the mother Faithful, and they had eight children.

John Fuller and Foster King, sons of Zadok, fathered the power canal and advertised the power in Wall St., New York City. The first tap and die works on their canal was also started by John Fuller King. The King family was civic minded and opened their home to public prayer meetings in their first winter here. Out of these grew Waterford's First Methodist Church. Strange it seems that the grave-stone of Faithful King should now form part of the sidewalk on Waterford's Fifth Street.

#### LYSANDER BUTTON

Lysander Button was born in North Haven, Conn., September 2, 1810 and settled in Waterford in 1831 where he started in work as a machinist.

About the year 1835 he entered the firm of William B. Platt and Nicholas B. Doe, who made fire engines of a primitive design. Lysander Button later bought the interests of Mr. Platt and upon the death of Judge Doe became the sole owner of the fire engine business which he then conducted for fifty years. During part of

this time Robert Blake was a partner after which Lysander's son, Theodore E. Button, entered the firm which was finally known as L. Button & Son.

Lysander Button, a man of sterling character, began life in Waterford entirely without capital, but built such quality into his machines that the "Button Fire Engine" could soon be found in every State of the Union, in Canada, South America, and in Europe. When he retired after making numerous improvements and adding inventions to his fire engine, it was known as a marvel of power and a thing of beauty. As late as 1952 a fire association in Seattle, Washington, described their treasured Button engine as being a "beautiful piece of craftsmanship."

In 1838 Lysander Button united with the Presbyterian Church of Waterford, holding high offices. Besides being Superintendent of the Sunday School for twenty-five years, he was a teacher until one year before his death. He served that Church faithfully for over sixty years. He died July 29, 1898 and is buried at the Waterford Rural Cemetery.

The late Charles R. Button of No. 22 Third Street, a descendant, was also associated with the Button Fire Engine concern.

His children were Henry V. Button and Marion A. Button. The latter resides at the homestead of Charles R. Button.

### JOHN K. PORTER

Judge Porter was born in Waterford on January 12, 1819, the son of Dr. Elijah Porter and a grandson of Moses Porter, a Revolutionary officer who fought at Bemis Heights. His higher education started under David McNeice a fellow exile of Thomas Emmett. McNeice taught at the Classical School at Waterford where John Cramer, another noted Waterford lawyer, also studied. He next entered the Waterford Academy under Taylor Lewis, later a Professor at Union College.

Porter went to Union College at the age of sixteen years and after graduation entered the law office of Judge N. B. Doe and Richard B. Kimball, Waterford lawyers. In 1840 he was admitted to the Supreme Court bar, where he opposed many of the great lawyers of that time. In 1864 Union College awarded him the LL.D.



degree. In the same year he became a Judge of the Court of Appeals after moving his practice to New York City.

He gave many important decisions and won many cases of a national character, being rated as one of the ablest legal advocates that New York State has produced. He obtained national recognition as a special U. S. Prosecutor during the trial of President Garfield's slayer, Guiteau.

### JOHN CRAMER

Hon. John Cramer was almost the exact opposite of John Porter as regards descent and start in life. He was a most successful lawyer and in twenty years amassed a fortune of \$100,000.00 in a day when that was real money.

He was of German descent and was born in a wagon near Old Saratoga (Schuylerville) on May 14, 1779, during a belated Canadian Indian raid. His family was fleeing southward to Fitzgeralds near Waterford. They had been turned away from a crowded tavern below Schuylerville, and spent the night of May 14, in the wagon.

In 1800, after a liberal education he opened a law office in Waterford and resided there during his long life of over 91 years. He became an active politician at an early age and was in 1804 a presidential elector for Jefferson. He was a staunch supporter of the Union and its Waterford Civil War volunteers, and although aged led the company partway, as it departed for the war.

### ISAAC, GEORGE WASHINGTON, AND THOMAS JEFFERSON EDDY

This was a notable Waterford family which contributed largely to Waterford's early prosperity.

Isaac Eddy an engineer obtained a first patent in 1824 for pulverizing the ingredients of printers' ink. He came to Waterford in 1826 and out of his patent grew the Franklin Ink Works established in Waterford in 1831 by the above three Eddys.

George W. Eddy and Thomas J. Eddy, sons of Isaac, were both inventors and manufacturers. Thomas J. invented the formula for making colored printers ink. The ink manufacturing concern later developed into the making of lamp black on King's power canal.

George W. Eddy established the Mohawk and Hudson Foundry about 1847. This became the century old Eddy Valve works still in operation. Eddy's first foundry made stoves, iron castings and steam car wheels. George W. then invented the famed "Eddy" valve for which the Columbia Exposition awarded him a medal in 1893. He died in Waterford on December 5, 1897.

Mary Emily Eddy, daughter of Thomas J., married Waterford's Dr. Allen G. Peckham. This union joined the descendants of two noted English families. One Peckham was an Archbishop of Canterbury, and another died in the Crusades. One of the Eddys, a graduate of England's Trinity College, became Vicar of St. Dunstons in 1589.

Waterford's Dr. Harold P. Peckham is a son of Dr. Allen G. Peckham.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

### THE FINE ARTS AND SOCIETIES IN WATERFORD

#### RALPH A. SAVAGE, WATERFORD'S ARTIST, 1827-1904 AND OTHERS

RALPH SAVAGE was born in 1827. He was Waterford's gifted pioneer artist. Had he lived in a larger place and amid the publicity and artistic appreciation of 1956 he would easily have topped that class known as the "Grandma Moses" group.

In his first oil painting made in 1848 can be discerned that superior artistic touch that later made his work nearly professional.

His skillful hands had been developed in earlier years as he hand striped and painted the renowned Button Fire Engines which were described by their owners as "beautiful hand painted jobs."

Doubtless as his clever hands worked on such crude subjects as fire engines his mind and desires must have drifted to the beautiful rural scenes about him.

So in spare moments and in later years, his faithful wife Sarah and he became a "team." She would go to the richer homes in Waterford and take orders for oil paintings and Ralph would be happy as he filled these orders.

In this manner Ralph Savage managed to put on canvas many of the lovely and true views of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, together with fine paintings of flowers and fruit.

At last in 1860 he had "arrived" for in that year he was accorded the title that must have cheered this master, it was, "The Prince of Artists."<sup>1</sup> He died in 1904 and rests in the Waterford Rural Cemetery.

We who have managed to secure Ralph Savage's century old paintings treasure and esteem them.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Waterford Sentinel*, August 4, 1860.



## ARTISTS OF 1957

Waterford, in 1957, has a group of artists who have been trained in modern technique.

Among these artists who are known to have exhibited and sold their oil paintings in nearby cities are: Mrs. Harold M. (Daisy) Weber, Sr.; Mr. William J. Brown, Jr. (Postmaster); Mrs. Phillip L. (Ruth) Wallace, and Mrs. Helen H. Jones.

CLINTON LODGE, NO. 140 FREE AND  
ACCEPTED MASONS

Clinton Lodge No. 140, Free and Accepted Masons, was organized December 27, 1848 and was named in honor of Governor and General Clinton who was Grand Master of Masons from 1814 to 1824.

Among its charter members were several members from the 1795 Orange Lodge. Clinton's first meeting was held December 28, 1848 and its first officers were—

OFFICERS: *Master*, James M. Austin, Doctor of Medicine; *Senior Warden*, John Hinde, Manufacturer; *Junior Warden*, John Fulton, Miller; *Treasurer*, John Higgins, Druggist; *Secretary*, Frederick W. Allen, Iron Founder; *Senior Deacon*, Joseph H. Cudworth, Painter; *Junior Deacon*, John Mulliken, Machinist; *Tiler*, John Roe, Machinist.

Its first home was at Waverly Hall located at the south-east corner of Broad and Third Streets. It next met in the Howard House, now the site of the Bank of Waterford. Its third home was in the first town hall. Here the Masons met until 1876 when they moved to "Masonic Hall" a building erected at 63 Broad Street by John Higgins a Past Master of Clinton Lodge.

In 1915 the Lodge acquired and has since occupied the ancestral home of General Samuel Stewart located at the north-west corner of Broad and First Streets and built by Stewart in 1802. Most of the bricks in the Temple were made in Holland and on one of the Temple's fireplace mantels is a carved bust of Alexander Hamilton who with Governor Morgan Lewis and Governor George Clinton

were frequent visitors as the Stewart home. General Stewart was an architect and sloop owner and brought the Holland brick from New York in his sloops, landing them at the famed 244 foot pier at the "Battery."

Twenty-three members of Clinton Lodge responded to their country's call during World War I and twenty-one served in the Army, Navy and the Air Force during World War II.

Of those in military service during World War I, six were Royal Arch Masons.

On October 27, 30 and 31, 1948 Clinton Lodge celebrated the One Hundreth Anniversary of its founding.

On October 27 Colonel Sydney E. Hammersley, A.U.S. Retired, gave an address on "One Hundred Years of Clinton Lodge."

On Sunday the 30th, the Lodge was escorted by Apollo Commandery to the Waterford Presbyterian Church where joined by the Methodists, Baptists, and the Presbyterians, they were addressed by Rev. George A. Cole, Lecturer of New York State's Royal Arch Masons. Refreshments were served later at the Masonic Temple.

The celebration closed with a Masonic banquet held at the Temple the evening of October 31st attended by the Masons and their families.

In 1956 the Clinton Lodge officers were: *Master*, William McClean; *Senior Warden*, Benet Ripin (former W.M.); *Junior Warden*, George Henning; *Treasurer*, Thomas V. Wolcott; *Secretary*, Charles L. Mead (former W.M.); *Senior Deacon*, Edward Lusier; *Junior Deacon*, Edward Hall; *Tiler*, Robert Cairnduff.

In the year 1956 Past Master Charles L. Mead is serving Clinton Lodge as its Secretary for his 30th consecutive year.

Many relics, some 160 years old, are treasured by the Waterford Masons and were accumulated during their 161 years in Waterford.

One of these is—

### CLINTON GAVEL, FROM HALFMOON II

Gustave Carlson of Evening Star Lodge of Watervliet presented Clinton Lodge with a gavel made from the century old ship timber of the *Halfmoon II* which was given to the State of New York by the Dutch Government for the Hudson-Fulton Celebration in 1909.

The latter commemorated the 300th Anniversary of the discovery of the Hudson River.

The second Halfmoon was built under the direction of the Dutch Admiral Roell by Engineer E. J. Benthier at the Royal Dutch Ship Yards at Amsterdam, Holland during 1908-1909. The Dutch Government contributed the oak timber for the *Halfmoon*. It had been submerged under the water of the Dutch Navy Yard for over a century.

The ship weighed 80 tons and carried 36 tons of ballast. She was an exact replica of the original *Halfmoon* in which Henry Hudson discovered the Hudson river in 1609. Her keel was laid on October 29, 1908 and the *Halfmoon II* was completed and launched on April 15, 1909. She did not sail to the United States under her own masts but came over aboard the N. A. Line Steamship the *Soistdyk* arriving in New York on July 22, 1909.

In her forecastle, after the custom of ancient times, were fastened three brass tablets bearing inscriptions in the Dutch language. These read, (1) "Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother," (2) "Do Not Fight Without Cause" and (3) "Good Advice Makes the Wheels Run Smoothly."

On September 25, 1909 the *Halfmoon* set forth from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to take part in the opening Hudson-Fulton ceremonies.

Following much discussion after the celebration, the vessel was unwisely awarded to the City of Cohoes. It was pulled ashore and put on display on Van Schaicks Island, near the famous Van Schaick Mansion.

Be it ever to the disgrace of the local canaille, she was repeatedly and persistently set afire until totally destroyed by probable youthful vandals.

Near the *Halfmoon II's* funeral pyre was the old 1600-1700 Van Schaick Cemetery. It was protected for some years by a spiked iron fence and the patrimony of Troy's Wm. Floyd Chapter, Sons of the Revolution. This group became weary in well doing about 1949 and withdrew their protection. Immediately the local lawless class wrought destruction on the Cemetery. The iron fence was



promptly torn down and fires built against the pushed over grave stones until their crumbling was accomplished. Such things take place in Cohoes, New York.

Clinton Lodge 140 was the successor to old colonial lodge, Orange Lodge No. 43, which was organized in 1795. This ancient group is now described.

#### ORANGE LODGE, NO. 43, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

Orange Lodge No. 43 F. & A. M., was organized on December 25, 1795 and was composed of 183 members of whom 43 were veterans of the American Revolution. Twenty-three Masters served Orange Lodge from 1795 to 1835.

Members of this Lodge were among the organizers of the Village of Waterford. They also promoted the first Cohoes-Waterford bridge across the Mohawk river in 1795. They inspired Waterford's first use of water power by connecting the "Battery" and Peebles Island with a dam to operate our first grist mill. A little later its members promoted the building of King's power canal which proved to be a prime factor in a Waterford's early prosperity. J. M. King its main operator, was a member of Orange Lodge.

The 1795 Officers were: *Master*, Dr. John Stearns; *Senior Warden*, Moses Scott; *Junior Warden*, Hezekiah De Forest; *Treasurer*, Ira Scott; *Secretary*, Matthew Gregory; *Senior Deacon*, John C. Connell; *Junior Deacon*, Thomas Ostrander; *Tiler*, Thomas McEntee.

Dr. Stearns, whose picture is in the Saratoga County Historical Society rooms, was a doctor of medicine. His habit in that early time was to write out all his prescriptions and directions in Latin. This was a bit rough on the prescription clerk who had to master Latin too in order to satisfy the doctor's needs.

Among Orange's officers and members was Moses Scott, a Revolutionary soldier and a Village founder, together with Samuel Stewart who became a general and a member of Clinton Lodge. John Pettit and Matthew Gregory were both former Captains in the Revolutionary army and were also Village founders. John Connell was a Village founder, while John Watson was both a former Revolutionary Lieutenant and a Village founder.

Old Orange Lodge furnished soldiers and sailors for our coun-

try's two first wars. Many were actors in the dark and critical days of the Revolution and among its members we find names not only prominent as Masons but men also active in town, county, state and national affairs.

Orange Lodge's minute book barely escaped destruction during the great Village fire of 1841. The leather covered book, with its edges badly fire charred was accidentally discovered after the fire and found its way back to its successor, Clinton Lodge. Its finely written pages are legible and it has been glass framed and remains open at the page announcing the death of our "Great and Worthy Brother George Washington," which also instructs the Lodge to go in mourning, with a piece of crepe about the arm for the period of six weeks.

Orange Lodge continued until June 5, 1835, being succeeded by Clinton Lodge in 1848.

#### WATERFORD CHAPTER NO. 169 OF ROYAL ARCH MASONS

This body of Masonry next higher than Clinton Lodge, was Chartered on February 8, 1860 and Instituted on February 14, 1860, by a grant from the Grand Chapter which had met just before at Albany.

The temporary Chapter rooms at Waverly Hall were thrown open to the public for the dedication and installation ceremonies which were said to be of a solemn and impressive character. Companion Joel Tiffany gave the opening address and a joint choir of ladies and gentlemen gave numerous selections.

Delegations from Lansingburg, Troy and Cohoes Chapters joined the Waterford group at this festive event.

Immediately after the dedication ceremony on Tuesday, February 14, 1860, the Chapter moved to "Union Hall" and the Chapter then held its first Convocation.

The first Officers were—

*Most Excellents:* L. G. Hoffman, as High Priest; John Fulton, King; John C. House, Scribe.

*Companions:* John J. Wendell, Captain of Host; D. M. Van Hoevenburgh, Principal Sojourner, W. H. Vanderwerker, Royal Arch Captain; Orrin Goodrich, Master Third Vail; Isaac Schouten, Master

Second Vail; John Conaughty, Master First Vail; John Higgins, Secretary; W. H. Scott, Treasurer.

*Reverend*: Truman Seymour, Chaplain; Thomas S. Truland, Sentinel.

The new Chapter adopted each alternate Monday evening as meeting night which has since been changed to Thursday evening.

Waterford Chapter of Royal Arch Masons has had a successful and happy career over the years and is planning to celebrate its Centennial in 1960.

The 1956 Officers are: *Excellent High Priest*, Charles M. Swankey; *King*, William McClean; *Scribe*, Alfred Bulson; *Captain of the Host*, William W. Storm, Right Excellent Companion; *Treasurer*, William W. Storm, Right Excellent Companion; *Secretary*, Arthur T. Livingston, Excellent Companion; *Principal Sojourner*, Thomas McKean, Excellent Companion; *Royal Arch Captain*, Charles L. Mead, Meritorious Companion; *Master Third Vail*, R. Gordon Yaxley, Meritorious Companion; *Master Second Vail*, John W. Egleston, Excellent Companion; *Master First Vail*, Walter Bulson, Excellent Companion; *Sentinel*, Charles Dormandy, Meritorious Companion; *Chaplain*, Thomas McKean, Excellent Companion.

#### MASTER MARK LODGE, ORANGE NO. 4

This ancient Masonic body, higher than Orange Lodge No. 43, apparently existed in Waterford in 1797 doubtless working concurrently with Orange Lodge.

No written records are available but several silver "jewels" once awarded to Waterford Master Mark Masons are in possession of Clinton Lodge. All are engraved with the Waterford insignia and the Lodge member's name and Masonic data together with markings peculiar to that Masonic M. M. L. degree. One of these silver plates was received from out of state by Past Master and Meritorious Companion Charles L. Mead of Clinton Lodge and Waterford Chapter. Waterford's Master Mark Orange Lodge No. 4 is thus proven to be a Masonic body doubtless connected later with the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons when the latter was organized on March 14, 1798.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The author acknowledges assistance given by W. K. Walker, Masonic Grand Lodge Library, W. Bro. Charles L. Mead, Clinton Lodge, and Rt. W. Bro. Thomas McKean, of Clinton Lodge.



The "Mark" degree was given as a side degree in "Master Lodges" and George Washington is supposed to have received it in Lodge No. 227 attached to the 46th Regiment during his service in the French War of 1754-1755.<sup>3</sup>

#### WATERFORD COUNCIL NO. 237, KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The Waterford Council is one of the pioneer councils in this part of New York State. It was founded on Sunday June 13, 1897, with a charter membership of forty-nine. At that time the First and Second Degrees were exemplified by the Cohoes and Watervliet Councils and the Third Degree by District Deputy John T. Norton and staff of Troy.

The first officers of the Council, installed immediately thereafter, were: Francis A. Martin, Grand Knight; William T. Ranney, Deputy Grand Knight; William L. Terry, Chancellor; Robert A. Halpin, Warden; George A. Dunnigan, Financial Secretary; Dr. Frank A. Sulzman, Recording Secretary; Daniel B. McCarthy, Treasurer; Michael Brown, Advocate; John E. Ranney, Lecturer; Thomas A. Keane and Thomas Gaynor, Guards of Honor; William O'Connor, Inside Guard; Thomas A. Meeker, Outside Guard; and Rev. J. P. Curran, O.S.A., Chaplain.

For the first few years the Council held its meetings at the Bolton Building on the corner of Broad and Fourth Streets. Permanent quarters were fitted up at Broad and Third Streets and maintained until the Y.M.C.L.A. disbanded. Then the Council took over two floors of the Bolton building where it remained until late in 1918.

The present home, the former Breslin place, was dedicated with impressive ceremonies on December 10, 1918 and was blessed by Rev. D. J. O'Sullivan, O.S.A., assisted by Rev. W. H. Cotter, O.S.A. The dedication ceremonies were supervised by Frank E. FitzPatrick, Grand Knight, and William C. Quandt, Deputy Grand Knight. The officers and members at that time financed the purchase of the home and succeeded in handing it down, mortgage free, to future generations of Waterford Knights of Columbus.

The Council grew through the years from the 49 Charter Mem-

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<sup>3</sup> *Encyclopedia of Free Masonry*, Mackey, Hagan & Hawkin, 1924, Vol. II, page 838.

bers to its present membership of 185, among whom are sons and grandsons of the Charter Members.

Four members served with General John Pershing in the undeclared war between the United States and Mexico (Border Incident) in 1916. Twenty-six members served in World War I. Forty-five members saw action in World War II, and up to June 15, 1952 four members had been recalled to duty in the Korean conflict.

On June 15, 1952 the Council observed its Fifty-Fifth Anniversary. The Council received Holy Communion at 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Mary's Church, followed at 3:00 p.m. by the Exemplification of the Third Degree at the Troy Council Rooms.

The 55th Anniversary Dinner was held at 7:00 p.m. A program followed in which Rev. Francis A. Diehl, O.S.A., gave the Invocation, followed by the introduction of the Toastmaster, Hon. William E. Morris, by Edward J. O'Connor.

The following Toasts were given: Our Chaplain, Rev. John P. Hennessey, O.S.A.; Our Charter Members, Dr. Frank M. Sulzman; Our Silver Anniversary Members, James A. Glavin; Our New Brothers, James A. Baker Jr.; Our Grand Knight, Robert B. Halpin.

The address of the evening was given by the Hon. William E. Burke, Supreme Director of the Knights of Columbus, followed by the Benediction by the Rev. Francis A. Diehl, O.S.A., Pastor of St. Mary's Church in Waterford. Dancing followed the dinner with music by Anderson's Orchestra.

Three Charter members of Waterford Council still survive and some attended the Anniversary celebration. These were:

Dr. Frank M. Sulzman, noted physician of Troy, born in Waterford, and honored by the Medical Profession for fifty years as a Doctor.

Francis A. Martin, born in Waterford, and the Council's first Grand Knight and a distinguished Lawyer of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad. (Died in 1955)

John T. Haggerty, born in Waterford, and the Council's Recording Secretary in 1900 and now a retired knit goods executive.

William J. Keohan, born and educated in Waterford and now retired and living at Scotia, N. Y.

Charles A. Rhein, retired, only surviving member not born in Waterford, but educated in the Waterford Schools.

The 1956 Officers of Waterford Council, No. 237, Knights of Columbus, are: Reverend James M. Seymour, O.S.A., *Chaplain*; Kenneth J. Hart, *Grand Knight*; Earl J. Matteson, *Deputy Grand Knight*; John A. Ryan, *Chancellor*; Bernard T. Maron, *Financial Secretary*; John L. LaBarge, *Recording Secretary*; Thomas R. Dyer, *Warden*; Matthew T. Hayes, *Treasurer*; Richard P. Doody, Jr., *Lecturer*; James A. O'Connor, *Advocate*; Joseph M. Barbetta, *Inside Guard*; Cornelius J. Sweeney, *Outside Guard*; Robert B. Halpin, *Trustee One Year*; John J. Cassidy, *Trustee Two Years*; Anthony J. Catallo, *Trustee Three Years*.

Frank E. Fitzpatrick of Waterford Council No. 237 attained high rank in area Knights of Columbus circles being selected as District Deputy for four terms up to 1956. He was also elected chairman of the Capital District Conference embracing a membership of 10,000 Knights.

#### WATERFORD'S CHARLES J. BRADY POST No. 235 THE AMERICAN LEGION

The Charles J. Brady Post, No. 235 of the American Legion was organized in 1919 immediately after our Waterford veterans returned from World War I.<sup>4</sup> The Post was named in honor of Charles J. Brady, the first Waterfordian to lose his life in that war.

The Legion rooms show pictures of his burial place in France. His resting place, so far from Waterford, recalls the Theodore Roosevelts who said of their son Kermit who also died in France, "Let the tree rest where it fell."

The "Legion" is a time honored name which comes to us from Roman history and the Scripture.<sup>5</sup> Its national leadership is most fervently dedicated to the principles of American patriotism and its defense.

The Post started with the following twenty-six charter members. Oswald Weaver, J. William Hartnett, Henry L. Lucier, Harry Hart, John Dalton, William Hart, Thomas F. Morris, J. Ralph Heinzen, Maurice Hays, Orville Reynolds, W. Earl Lawrence, John McGaffin,

<sup>4</sup> Legion data from Past Commander James A. Galvin.

<sup>5</sup> St. Mark, Chapter 5, Verse 9.



J. Irwin Holton, Leonard Holton, Thomas Holton, Stephen Keating, Harry Peek, Tracy S. Walsh, Gerald W. O'Connor, George E. O'Connor, William Mitchell, Thomas Higgins, Joseph C. O'Connor, John J. Curtin, Chauncey Gregg and William Harney.

The first Commander of the Post was John McGaffin, followed by George E. O'Connor, James A. Galvin, John F. Harney, Stephen Keating, Charles J. Weaver, Byron Keene, J. Irwin Holton, Leonard Perrin, William Burgess, W. Earl Lawrence, Carl Sorensen, Alonzo Roselle, Oscar R. Cooper, Richard Cornetti, Robert Lyle, Arthur Anderson, Earl F. Raymond, Joseph Reilly, Arthur Bourgeois, Arthur Fredette, Alfred Arneaut, and Fred Leffler.<sup>6</sup>

When first organized, Brady Post held annual meetings only, the business being conducted by an executive committee. Its first Commander was for a time called the President.

Regular monthly meetings began in 1922 when quarters were secured in the Odd Fellows Hall at Broad and Fourth streets where dances, entertainments and social meetings were also held.

Late in 1922 the Legionnaires shared with the Waterford veterans of the Civil War the top floor of the Town Hall building.

Several years later the Post moved their quarters to the former Waterford Club rooms in the Town Hall, part of which are still occupied by Brady Post.

From an original membership of 26, the Post reached an all time high of 277 members during the office of Commander Oscar R. Cooper.

World War II veterans and certain veterans of the Korean War have become eligible for membership in the Post and many of them have joined the organization.

Brady Post has been honored by the election of James A. Galvin, Charles J. Weaver, Oscar R. Cooper and Earl Raymond to the office of Saratoga County Commander, while Commanders Galvin, Cooper and Raymond were later elected as life members of the Saratoga County organization.

Several members of the Post including James A. Galvin, Oscar

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<sup>6</sup> Correct sequence of names from Past Commanders Oscar R. Cooper and Earl F. Raymond.

R. Cooper and Earl Raymond have been elected as Chef de Garde (Commanding Officer) of the "Saratoga County Societe des 40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux," (The "40 & 8") the fun loving branch of the Legion.

The Waterford Legion has always been active in promoting the annual observance of Memorial Day, its parades frequently being a mile or more in length.

Brady Post in its patriotic observances virtually branched from Post Sheridan, Grand Army of the Republic. It once shared the same rooms with these gallant men until time and death separated the Civil War veterans. It naturally became the willing and the unforgettable task of Post Brady to decorate all veterans graves in our cemeteries on each Memorial Day.

One of the outstanding civic services of the Post has been the annual Halloween party for Waterford's teen-agers and children. In this manner they have guided our youth in proper and helpful entertainment.

Junior Baseball has always been actively supported by Brady Post, a record team once having been captained by a Word War II Veteran and a Korean Legionnaire Robert J. Scarry, M.A., B.A.

Annually too, the Legion Post sends to the "Empire Boy's State," a Waterford boy where he is taught the fundamentals of American government.

Just recently the Post sponsored the former St. Mary's Corps which will be re-activated by the Post.

During three decades of its existence Post Brady No. 235 has been actively supported and helped by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Legion which was organized in 1923. This auxiliary has taken an important part in all charity work and has helped rehabilitate the veterans of all wars.

The first President of the organization was Mrs. Byron Keene and all Legionnaires gladly declare that the auxiliary has been of untold benefit to the public and all members of Brady Post.

No full account of the organization's officers and history could be obtained.

### THE WATERFORD (INTERNATIONAL) LIONS CLUB

This Service Club devoted to "Liberty, Intelligence and our Nation's Safety" was organized in Waterford in 1938 with fifteen charter members. John G. Cole, Pharmacist, was its first President.

For many years this club has given Waterford a definite uplift service. Among the most important of these projects is Sight Conservation. The club contributes to the Sight Conservation Society by securing available pledges for eye cornea transplant service and has obtained for area residents, cornea transplant operations. In one case, two thousand dollars was raised for a single operation.

Other features conducted by the Lions are Christmas lighting for the Village Streets, Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for the needy, together with eye glasses for school children who cannot afford to buy them. Safety glasses were also furnished for Vocational students at Waterford School No. 1 together with bleachers for the playground. A very successful campaign was also conducted for a polio victim aided by the Prospect Hill Community Association. One of the Lions Club's most appreciated life saving projects is the "Learn to Swim" campaigns which are conducted annually.

Waterford has three historical markers telling visiting travelers that Waterford is New York State's oldest incorporated village.

Because of the alleged absence of Village funds, the generous Lions Club ordered and paid for two of the three markers, while the State furnished the third marker gratuitously.

### THE WATERFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

This is one of Waterford's latest groups which like the other Chambers of Commerce in the United States is devoted to helping home people discover their Town's or City's latent possibilities and bringing these qualities and opportunities to business establishments and concerns beyond the local area.

The efforts of the Waterford Chamber of Commerce have already been felt in the field of real estate, together with the establishment of attractive business days in Waterford whereby our people have been caused to trade here instead of buying out of town.

Their mission has been made very difficult by the invasion of the chain stores which are a trend of modern times.



This group of business people met at the Mansion on March 10, 1953 and out of that meeting grew the present Chamber of Commerce on August 19th of the same year. A Board of Directors and Officers were selected on August 24, 1953.

The names of the following Directors and Officers has been furnished:

*President*, Michael Harrigan; *Vice President*, Erric Laware; *Treasurer*, Thomas R. Dyer; *Secretary*, Mrs. Josephine E. Richter.

*Directors*: J. Edward Burgess, Erric Laware, Thomas R. Dyer, Michael Harrigan, Mrs. Helen Cassidy, Charles Finn, Richard Anderson, John Clement, Earl Dion.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

### WATERFORD'S BANKS

WATERFORD'S first bank, called the Saratoga County Bank, was a branch of the "Farmers" Bank of Troy, being organized May 29, 1830. Its first president was John Knickerbacker and its cashier, Jonathan Douglass.

It is remembered for its robbery by a band of armed men early on October 13, 1872. A Troy newspaper<sup>1</sup> reports it as one of the most daring bank robberies in "this section of the United States." Not only were all Waterford residents astounded by the event but the legal profession was too, since the robbers when caught and tried, were acquitted. One legal author writes that the trial's outcome did much to lower the standard of Saratoga county juries.<sup>2</sup>

There were seven robbers and they started in the basement by shining a "dark lantern" in a servant's face. They tied her to her bed, and one remained to guard her. Then proceeding upstairs they roused cashier D. M. Van Hoevenberg who, clad in only a night shirt, was escorted at gun point to the bank's safe and after violent persuasion, forced to open it. It was not a trivial scoop, for they missed but 2 bonds. Not only did the robbers obtain a half million<sup>3</sup> in cash and securities but they carried away a quantity of the jewelry belonging to Waterford society. In those days such valuables were kept in bank safes, but this Waterford affair badly scared the down-the-river banks who then invited their patrons to come and get the stuff. No more valuables wanted! The robbers knew their way around. They posted a man at each bedroom door and at a signal forced the doors, revolvers in hand. Binding and gagging the six occupants and neglecting the friendly dog, they were soon on their way to a carriage in the nearby alley. Daughter Sarah Van Hoevenberg was not afraid of guns. After the robber exodus she seized a

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<sup>1</sup> *The Times Record*, January 5, 1946.

<sup>2</sup> *Bench and Bar*, E. R. Mann, 1876, p. 170.

<sup>3</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, May 21, 1886.

pistol and fired several shots on Broad Street which brought help. Things did not move so fast in 1872. A Mr. Enos then drove his horse and buggy to Troy and reported the robbery to the sheriff and police. The robbers became known and some of the unregistered booty was recovered by compromise. The erring jurors who liberated Peter Curley the leader, a professional burglar, enjoyed a Ballston hotel banquet from Waterford bank funds,<sup>4</sup> kindness of Mr. Curley. Curley was either very smart or lucky. A few months later he was caught robbing a bank at Barre, Vt. Turning state's evidence on a gang member he again escaped.

This Saratoga County Bank lasted until 1885 then went out of business. The Bank of S. C. Bull and Company succeeded it with Bull as President and Frank Follet as Cashier. The author's brief financial career received a start in this bank. On an errand to Bull's bank as a small boy, I found my first dollar bill upon the floor. I had hardly picked it up when the bewiskered Mr. Bull took it from me and put it (we hope) among the bank's funds. This bank we think, lasted until sometime in the early 1900's. The building is now Quandt's Mortuary.

### THE BANK OF WATERFORD

This is Waterford's third Bank site and the Bank is both complete and modern with a pleasing style of architecture.

The Bank was founded on March 19, 1919 by Charles H. Kavanaugh who died on February 18, 1931. Its first and temporary site was in the Town Hall building. Quickly outgrowing its limited space it built its present home.

It now occupies the site of the old and historic Brewster-Howard House at No. 74 Broad Street. This was the scene of many early events and was the meeting place for village festivities while its upper floors were home for several lodges.

Quite strange to add, the first trial of the robbers of the 1872 first Waterford Bank took place on this site.

The first officers of the present Bank were—C. H. Kavanaugh, President; W. A. Tierney, Vice President; and W. D. Lowther, Cashier.

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<sup>4</sup> *Bench and Bar*, E. R. Mann, 1876, p. 171.



Its first Directors were—Charles H. Kavanaugh, George Michon, Arthur B. Cobden, Edward Strecker, Wm. A. Tierney, Louis R. Breslin, and Edward L. Orth.

Its 1956 Officers are: W. B. Bishop, *President*; H. W. Turner, *Vice President*; J. H. Glavin, Jr., *Vice President*; D. E. Brundige, *Asst. Cashier*; J. E. Curtin, *Secretary*, R. M. Pallozi, *Assistant Secretary*.

The 1956 Directors are: R. F. Anderson, A. D. Bishop, W. B. Bishop, R. J. Carignan, H. D. Clayton, L. C. Feathers, J. H. Glavin, Jr., W. E. Morris, H. L. Mosley, H. W. Turner.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

### THE NORTHSIDE

THE WATERFORD zone known as the Northside commences at the south line of the Waterford Rural Cemetery and extends southward to the Mohawk River. It was once called "Dodgeville,"<sup>1</sup> and a map of 1856<sup>1a</sup> shows that a Mr. J. Dodge lived at the school's site. The Northside is a mile long and with its partly undeveloped land is about a mile wide. Its census population is included with that of Waterford. It may, however, number about a thousand people.

Because of its isolation by distance from both Waterford and Cohoes it has of necessity grown to be a self-contained section. It has separate schools, churches, fire protection and stores.

Its name throughout the years has puzzled non-residents. Finally in 1953 a Troy news writer arrived to ask, "Why the Name?" The answer known to most of us, is that it is the north side of Cohoes. The name, correct only in a geographical sense, is associated with the development of water power from the Cohoes Falls, and also we suspect was part of a strategem to obtain satisfactory mail delivery for Northside in its early days.

Its extremity is a mile and one-half from the Waterford post-office, but it is a bit nearer to Cohoes. It once had wealthy people some of whom were prominent Cohoes business men but who had residences in the "Northside." It doubtless was easy to arrange to call the place the north side of Cohoes and so get mail delivery from that city.

Cohoes' name seems to carry a charm for many of the Northside residents. This amicable feeling for Cohoes grew out of the employment of Northside people in the Harmony and Cohoes knitting mills in early days.

A majority of these workers came from Canada and built up a

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<sup>1</sup> Waterford Public School Records.

<sup>1a</sup> Map, Waterford, 1856, by Clark & Newcomb, C. Engrs.

habitation on Waterford's steep Mohawk cliffs that came to be known as the French Settlement. This loyalty to Cohoes still continues and is best shown by the still existing problem of mail delivery. Northside people are Waterford residents. They vote and are taxed in Waterford. Yet twice in a few years the Northside people south of Arch Street have refused to have their mail delivered from Waterford. It must come from Cohoes in Albany County. This confuses both the legal and postal addresses of these Saratoga County residents. Northside's mail service has always been a problem because of its remote or "in between" location. For this reason Northsiders had a reason to be grateful when after 1832 door to door mail carrier service was started from Cohoes. It saved the Northside residents a long walk to the Waterford postoffice. Cohoes' mail delivery to the Northside paid a debt that Cohoes owed Waterford because "Cohoesville"<sup>2</sup> had received all its mail from Waterford up to 1832.<sup>3</sup> After that date the Cohoes postoffice was established under Fred Waterman.

An old map shows but three established homes on the Northside-Waterford road. The owners were Lawrence Vanderwerken, Hugh White and William Punderson Mansfield. The Vanderwerkens were great land owners in both the Northside and Waterford while both White and the Mansfields made for themselves places in local history. The Hon. Hugh White 3rd came from Whitestown in April 1830 and built the great house to the left of the 1955 Atlantic and Pacific store, the latter being in Hugh's orchard. The lumber for his Northside home was shipped here ready for erection from Chittenango, New York through the Erie Canal, the latter built largely by Hugh's engineer brother, Canvas White. The latter invented the American version of hydraulic cement, which later brother Hugh made by Mohawk water power not far from his home. Hugh owned two farms in Cohoes, and Canvas and White streets on one farm in Cohoes, are named after these active men. Both were presidents of the Cohoes company and once during Canvas White's absence, Hugh took charge of Cohoes business by building two dams and a power

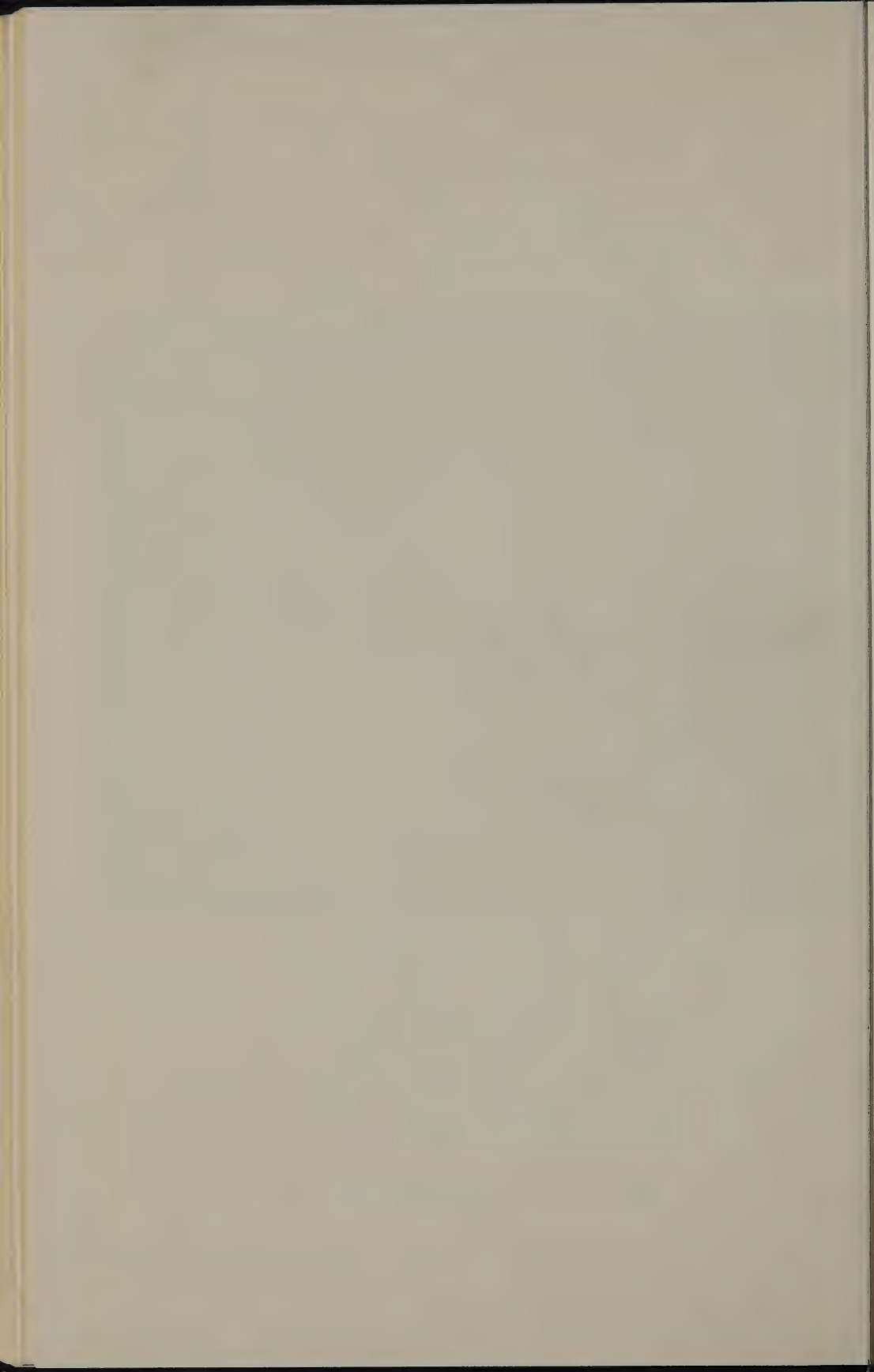
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<sup>2</sup> *Waterford Atlas*, May 8, 1833.

<sup>3</sup> *Waterford Union*, May 23, 1832.







canal. While Hugh White was a prominent Cohoes business man he preferred to live in the Northside.

William Punderson Mansfield came to Northside in 1830<sup>4</sup> and Hugh White married his daughter. Immediately a friendly rivalry arose between the two. Two homes, built with fronts exactly alike, were erected by these two men, directly opposite each other. Each had ten rooms, and the houses are of the Connecticut, Colonial type. Hugh White won the contest by adding a room to his home each time a child was born,<sup>5</sup> until at last count the rambling structure had twenty-five rooms, plus halls, pantries and three bath rooms.

Both Mansfield and Hugh White had fine gardens and needed water. Mansfield for his garden somehow pumped water from the Champlain canal beneath him. Hugh White went him one better. He piped water without pumping, all the long distance from the upper level of Cohoes Company's canal, nearly a mile away. The water pipes, cased in brother Canvas's celebrated cement, ran across the bottom of the wild Mohawk river and up the cliffs to Hugh's place.

The White and Mansfield homesteads on Saratoga Avenue, Northside (still standing) are noted by two historical markers. On the Mansfield marker Lewis W. the son of William Punderson Mansfield is described as being an author. We have read some of his booklets which are of the uplift type of literature.

Cohoes history says he operated the Empire Mill in 1861. From 1863 until 1865 both Mansfield's mill and his home on Northside celebrated the advent of Lent with "Social Singing" by the mill workers<sup>6</sup> and the general public. Lewis W. Mansfield as a religious man, practised what he preached.

Along the west shore of the northern branch of the Mohawk River, adjacent to the Northside, was located the larger part of Waterford's industrial empire. This began at the Mohawk river near the bridge commencing with J. Himes flour mill existing in 1812. Continuing the flour industry, came Hugh White with his Shawte-

<sup>4</sup> *Cohoes History*, A. H. Masten, 1876, p. 270 says W. P. Mansfield came in 1833.

<sup>5</sup> Mrs. George Willsdon, in the *Cohoes American*, March 2, 1935.

<sup>6</sup> *Northside Letters*, L. W. Mansfield, 1892, pp. 58-59.



mack mill. Nearby also operated by Mohawk water power, was the hydraulic cement mill run by Hugh White.

In this same area towards Dial City was King's power canal, running the paper mill which came to be the present Mohawk Paper Mills Inc. Here also were a host of other mills and factories which helped to give Waterford its early fame.

At the extreme south end of the Northside is the modern cement "Roosevelt" bridge which connects with Cohoes. This bridge is one of six which have crossed the turbulent Mohawk since the first one was erected in 1795. The latter was said to be the second major bridge erected in New York State.

A short distance east of the bridge the post glacial Mohawk river divides itself into the four "sprouts" or branches which with some of the numerous islands formed thereby had a prominent part in Colonial history. A war trail which went across Green, VanSchaick and Peebles (Haver) Islands, led to Canada.

In time the old Northside-Waterford road with its three houses became the thickly populated Saratoga Avenue with a large public school and the large and modern A. & P. store.

Through the center of Northside runs the main line of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad<sup>7</sup> to Canada, on the tracks here owned by the Albany & Vermont Railroad. West of the railway and continuing north from Grace Street is the Clement Realty of Waterford, Inc. a new and ever growing residential zone started by Albert Clement and which consists of about fifty new modern homes.

### NORTHSIDE'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Northside's first school was a brick building built in what was called Dodgeville from 1857 until 1878, when that name faded away.

It was a one story brick structure—"put up in a buckwheat patch" on August 11, 1857, by Contractor Peers for the sum of \$544.00. It was in the "neighborhood and south of Lawrence Vanderwerken's." The building lot was conveyed for school purposes by the Cohoes (Power) Company. The one story affair was later replaced by a

<sup>7</sup> This section running to the Waterford "junction" is leased from the Albany and Vermont Railroad.

two story brick building having a belfry. Each of the two floors had one large and one very small room. In the year 1885 a wing was added giving an extra room on each floor. This increase in space was brought about by a taxpayer's meeting in July 15, 1871 when it was reported that the Dodgeville three teacher school was too small and that the children were going to the Cohoes schools. Investigation showed that the Dodgeville school facilities cost only one-sixteenth of that paid by the Waterford School No. 1 taxpayers; and unless the Dodgeville residents pledged to come under Waterford village costs, no help might be expected. The taxpayers, soon to be called Northside residents, then voted in 1871 to spend \$2500.00 for a new school. On February 21, 1884 Jehiel W. Himes complained in the newspapers about the crowding of the Northside school, saying that 3 to 4 scholars were being placed in one seat. Mr. Himes retracted his lament when it was shown that the difficulty was caused by the closing of the French school and that those pupils had come without warning into the Northside Public School. Adding to the difficulty was that the school benches (or seats) ordered for the 22 x 36 foot addition (to be ready in 1885) had not then arrived.

On December 1, 1896 the crowding of the Northside School again came into view when eight Northside citizens appeared at School No. 1 and complained. To alleviate this condition the Northside Sunday School Chapel was rented until January 3, 1897. In the meanwhile a School Board meeting was held in Waterford's School No. 1 and a unanimous (54) vote passed to borrow \$20,000.00 for the new Northside School, thus keeping the pledge to these residents made on April 20, 1889 when it was promised that a new Northside school would be built when needed.

In 1897 the former school was torn down and the present three story brick school erected by Stanton and Neary. Additional land, 50 foot front and rear, was purchased from Mrs. Sarah Monroe for a playground.

The new school was said to have been completed on January 3, 1897. On November 24, 1897 the general School District was changed, Schools No. 1 and No. 2 being placed in the same zone.

School No. 2 has seven teachers and instructs to the 6th grade. It has 180 pupils.

No one is alive to tell us where the actual first school in the buckwheat patch stood, but a pencil sketch of one who supposedly knew, shows a large water tank in the background.<sup>8</sup>

### THE GREAT NORTHSIDE FIRE

This conflagration occurred on Saturday May 25, 1895 some three score years ago. With a south wind blowing sharply, it burned some twenty buildings in what was then known as the French Settlement. While the flames covered some 85 thousand square feet, most of the destruction took place on both sides of Grace street, the burned zone extending to Clifton street.

The loss was estimated at \$80,000 and was only partly covered by insurance. The news accounts of some sixty years ago differ as to just how the fire started. The *Troy Times* said it began in property owned by Joseph Lattimore, while the *Troy Northern Budget* stated that it started in Joseph Latrimouille's barn or probably from a tinners furnace on the roof of Mendard Breault's carpenter shop.

When the Northside's Peck Hose Company arrived with their equipment the Lattimore and Breault places were roaring with flames. The firemen, it is said, were handicapped by low water pressure and firefighters in both Waterford and Cohoes received calls for help.

Chief Dunwoody of Waterford sent the renowned Knickerbocker steamer and a hose wagon. Acting Chief George A. House of Cohoes responded with the Adams steamer and a hose cart.

All the burned structures were built of wood and being close together and fanned by a breeze, made a fierce fire. The greatest factor in stopping it was a vacant lot.

As in most cases of fire some householders were greatly excited and threw their belongings into the street where the flames destroyed them.

A horse of the Cohoes Fire Department probably due to a valid reason went into a kicking spree as the hose was being laid. He kicked and bruised the shins of driver William McGuinness.

<sup>8</sup> Sketch in Waterford's School No. 1 Records.



The Peck Hose Company valiantly fighting the flames with the borrowed Cohoes firemen, lost nearly all of its hose, while Edward McDuff a Peck fireman was severely burned about the face.

This destructive fire caused a heavy increase in Northside fire protection rates.

### SAINT ANN'S NORTHSIDE CHURCH

This enduring brick Church on Grace street has served the Northside community for sixty-eight years. Its veteran Pastor Rt. Rev. Msgr. Augustin Surprenant, has ministered to St. Ann's faithfully and well for thirty-six years. The church stands on a base of natural rock and has withstood the local storms which partly wrecked other town churches. Tradition says too, that the great "Settlement" fire of 1895 was halted at the church doors by personal prayers of the pastor.

Standing in probably the highest place in the settlement, the church looks directly across the deep rock gorge of the Mohawk viewing the old buildings of the great Harmony company whose employment first gave birth to the Northside population. The Rev. Eugene Rey of Marseilles, France, founded the parish on June 26, 1887, a Mission preceding the church. For the first years of its existence it was connected with St. Joseph's church of Cohoes which also supplied the priests. While serving St. Ann's, Father Rey resided at the Sacred Heart rectory in Cohoes.

The first resident pastor was Rev. F. Xavier Lavallee of St. Norbert, P. Q. who served from 1900 to 1904 and who also built the pleasant church rectory.

Father Lavallee was succeeded by the Rev. George Lize who laid the foundations for the parochial school.

The parish of St. Ann's church has a remarkable record in that it has supplied six of its members as successful candidates for the priesthood. These are the Rev. Arthur Desautels, Rev. Arthur Dandeneau, Rev. Adrien Bechard, Rev. Harvey H. Bessette, Rev. Celas Robitaille, and Rev. Harvey Desautels, the last two born at Waterford.

St. Ann's enjoyed its 50th Anniversary Golden Jubilee celebration

in 1937 assisted by three of the priests ordained from St. Ann's parish.

Father Surprenant revealed at his time that the founding citizens of St. Ann's parish came from Canada, from St. Hyacinthe, P. Q., and others from St. Dominique of Bagot, St. Cesaire of Rouville, St. Alphonsus of Ganby, St. Ann's of Sorel, St. Ours, of Richelieu, St. John's of Quebec, Sherington and St. Edward of Napierville, St. James Mineur of St. John and still others from the parishes bordering the St. Lawrence and Richelieu in the diocese of Montreal.

After the parochial school was finished six Sisters of St. Christienne came to teach, St. Ann's being the only place in New York State where these nuns (from the mother house in Metz, France) taught school. At this time the school had 110 children. In 1940 five Sisters of the Holy Union (Provincial House at Fall River, Mass.) composed the faculty and taught 112 children.

Father Surprenant came to St. Ann's on August 28, 1919, from the House of the Good Shepherd of Troy where he was Chaplain. St. Ann's then became a busy parish. Father Surprenant shortly afterward clearing up a debt of \$16,880.00.

He conducts two masses each Sunday for 340 members, and is beloved by his people.

*Pastors of St. Ann's Church:* Rev. Eugene Rey, Founder, 1887-1897; Rev. L. A. Lavigne, Administrator, 1897-1900; Rev. F. X. Lavallee, First Resident Pastor, 1900-1904; Rev. George Lize, 1904-1905; Rev. H. Baillargeon, 1905-1915; Rev. George E. Gratton, 1915-1919; Ret. Rev. Msgr. Augustin Surprenant, 1919- . . .

#### THE NORTHSIDE CHAPEL (THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH)

This society commenced in 1895 as a Union Sunday School, but it also conducted prayer meetings held on a stated schedule. The Chapel organization not only cared for the religious education of the Northside children but also had adults upon its rolls.

Commonly known as the "Mission" it became a noted church center. While Protestant "Sunday School" work was founded as far back as 1870<sup>9</sup> in the Northside, this Chapel built in 1895 was the

<sup>9</sup> W. K. Mansfield, *The News*.

first building owned by Northside's Protestant religious workers. The Chapel movement was financed by several nearby Protestant evangelical churches who added to the donations given by the Northside people.

Mrs. Theodore Goodell is said to have been the first Chapel Superintendent and was followed by Miss Naomi Conklin who served the Chapel for many years. A campaign to pay for the Chapel was started and by January 11, 1905 the place was entirely paid for. The event was celebrated by a Jubilee and Dedication, when the mortgage was burned.

At this dedication ceremony the newspapers called the building the Northside Union Mission. It is situated at the south-west corner of Hill and Railroad streets. In the winter of 1945, the Wesleyan Methodists of the Champlain conference bought the Chapel from the trustees of seven vicinity churches, each church receiving an equal share of the purchase price.<sup>10</sup>

The Rev. Charles Dayton was the first Wesleyan pastor and served the church from March 28, 1945 until July 1946.

*Pastors of the Northside Wesleyan Methodist Church:* Rev. Stanley Klob, 1946-1949; Rev. Harris Earl, 1949-1951; Rev. Stanley Klob, 1951-1952; Rev. Wilbur J. Matson, 1953-1955.

#### THE F. B. PECK HOSE COMPANY, NO. 1

The F. B. Peck, Hose Company No. 1 was organized in 1886 with the formation of the Northside Fire Department within the specified Fire District. The latter with an assessed valuation of \$1,400,000.00 was formed under the Laws of 1886 Chapter 328, p. 521.

The Peck Hose Company consists of 11 officers and 92 men. Its 1956 officers are: Joseph J. Corrigan, *President*; Fred Weir, *Vice President*; Edward Heroux, *Recording Secretary*; Henry Heroux, *Financial Secretary*; Chester Normandin, *Treasurer*; Harvey Baillargeon, *Chief*; Edward Clinton, *Captain*; Ernest Potter, *First Assistant*; Robert Degnan, *Second Assistant*; Alderic Lajeunesse, *Trustee*; William Heroux, *Trustee*.

The Pecks have a pleasant two story brick home on Hill Street,

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<sup>10</sup> Letter, Rev. C. Dayton, Corinth, N. Y., 1955.



adjacent to the Albany and Vermont (D. & H.) Railway. Here are housed modern firefighting equipment together with social quarters for the volunteer force.

The Peck Hose Company, named after a Northside business man, Frank B. Peck, has rendered valuable service to the residents of the large Northside fire district for the past seventy years.

Probably its greatest testing time was at the great Northside fire of May 25, 1895 when hose was lost and a fireman burned.

Its active personnel has the full confidence of the Northside people as attested by an incident of 1955.

The Company was operating under the handicap of an outmoded and inadequate twenty-year old truck.

The Peck Hose members conducted a house-to-house canvass for a new fire truck on the eve of a special election which was to decide for or reject its purchase.

Realizing the irreplaceable service that these volunteer firemen are giving the Northside area, an almost unanimous vote was given by the taxpayers to purchase the \$15,000.00 12 cylinder Seagrave truck with a 750 gal. per minute delivery at the pump.

### EIGHT MOHAWK BRIDGES FROM NORTHSIDE TO COHOES

The wild Mohawk river and the ravages of fire have occasioned the building of no less than eight Northside-Cohoes bridges in about 145 years. This is a life span of about 18 years per bridge. The sturdy covered Union bridge across the Hudson river by contrast, lasted over a century. More surprising, its cementless and delapidated piers and abutments are now 154 years old.

#### 1795 TOLL BRIDGE

The first of the six passenger bridges, built in 1795,<sup>11</sup> was of the open trestle type. It was 900 feet long and rested on 13 stone pillars. The Cohoes end of the bridge was several hundred feet west of the 1956 railroad bridge or at the north end of Remsen street. The bridge continued downstreams on an angle to the Northside. It was dam-

<sup>11</sup> A French view book in the New York State Library shows an engraving of the 1795 Toll Passenger Bridge.



INTERIOR OF 1804 UNION BRIDGE

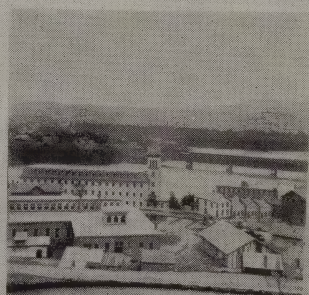
#### INTERIOR OF THE OLD WATERFORD BRIDGE

A most unique picture showing the inside view of the remarkable century-old wooden bridge between Lanesborough and Waterford, which passed into history through destruction by fire last July. The view gives an adequate idea of the original all-wood construction, and the reinforcement of timbers, steel rods and bolts made necessary by the advent of the trolley cars. A steel truss bridge, opened last month, occupies the site.



PICTURE BY  
LESSING &  
RICHARD ALLEN

BRIDGE, 1853, OVER HUDSON AT RED-WHITE&BLUE HOUSE.



RICHARD ALLEN PHOTO

1853 - 1861 ALBANY NORTHERN & VERMONT R.R. BRIDGE

## ANCIENT BRIDGES





aged by ice but lasted until 1825-26. The following five passenger bridges were moved downstream to the Saratoga Avenue location.

#### 1826 COVERED TOLL BRIDGE

The next covered bridge had five spans and was designed by Ethiel Town of Connecticut. It was a "Lattice Truss" structure and was built by Joseph Hayward of West Troy. Waterford's Jacob VanDerWerken was the toll collector both on the 1795 bridge and the 1826 bridge also. The structure had a Champlain Canal tow path on the downstream side. Grinding ice and high water partly destroyed the bridge in 1832. It was repaired but was finally destroyed by fire on March 13, 1853.

#### 1854 COVERED TOLL BRIDGE

In 1854 a new type experimental covered bridge with wooden trusses was erected. It was devised by Squire Whipple of Albany who also published the first mathematical treatise on bridge erection in 1847. This bridge also had a tow path for canal boats. This structure was destroyed by fire on October 31, 1871 and it was the last covered bridge at this Saratoga Avenue location.

#### 1872 COMBINATION BRIDGE—ALL IRON BRIDGE AND THE ROOSEVELT BRIDGE

These three structures in the order named crossed the Mohawk river from 1872 to 1956. The 1872 bridge was 704 foot long and had four spans. Being built of both wood and iron it was known as the "Combination Bridge." It was designed by S. S. Post of Jersey City, N. J. and it cost \$25,000. It was replaced by a bridge, all iron but the planking. The "All Iron" bridge was replaced by the present steel and concrete structure. The latter was named the "Roosevelt" but became better known as the Northside-Cohoes bridge.

#### 1853-1861 COVERED DECK RAILROAD BRIDGE

A railroad bridge of white pine and oak was erected by the Albany-Northern Railroad and opened on May 7, 1853 (Photo in this book). It has six spans and was 938 foot long. It was strengthened and covered in 1861 and was protected from fire by a watchman and several tubs of salt water.

## 1878 WROUGHT IRON DECK BRIDGE

The present structure, a wrought iron deck bridge, was built in 1878 by the Delaware Bridge Company. On the Railway bridge records it was known as "Bridge No. 7."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> All the Mohawk bridge data was furnished by Covered Bridge specialist Richard Sanders Allen of Round Lake, New York.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

### POLICE PROTECTION AND INCIDENTS

THE RAID upon the Waterford Bank in October of 1872 cast a scare up and down the Hudson Valley.

People had been in the habit of storing their valuables and securities in such institutions and following a war crime wave which started ten years before, the bankers had grown fearful.

Castleton, down the Hudson, seemed properly frightened. After our big bank robbery the directors of the Castleton bank passed a resolution declaring that "all parties having either securities or valuables must remove them; further that in the future the bank would not receive them."<sup>1</sup>

Not only Waterford but Lansingburg was included in this crime wave. Masked burglars entered several homes here and one, when detected, tried to choke the owner of the home. Our old teacher friend, Sarah E. Thurber together with another in this same house, raised such a noise that the intruder was caught.

While we have a record that Waterford (as Halfmoon) had a constable as early as 1700 such an officer is not noticed in print again until 1862. Such police protection must have existed, however. If so, the offering of Detective Muller of Albany to place a detective force in our village (about 1868) for as long a period as the property owners wished, is quite odd. He guaranteed against burglary or cattle stealing, and would pay full value for any property stolen. (His offering not taken.)

In 1862 we had two men, Constable Truland, and Great Constable Bonse. The latter must have been a "dead eye" for he shot a burglar invading from Lansingburg. The latter was not dead enough, however, and suddenly laid the great constable low with a sharp blow from an iron bar. Then followed a long chase as the miscreant started for the Vermont Railroad bridge over the Hudson, near the

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<sup>1</sup> News Scrap Book, Mrs. Brewster Irving Wright.



Red, White & Blue house. He must have been thirsty or a bit annoyed by that shot (probably from a .22 short, the caliber usually carried by our early police officers) and finally gave up the contest. After treatment by our Dr. Heartt, he was taken to Ballston.<sup>2</sup>

Early accounts say that our first lock up was a "small coop on Myrtle street." Later (in the 1900's) we had a jail room in the rear of the town hall building. It was once habitually, but temporarily occupied by "tramp" visitors to Waterford.

Then, using baseball terms, a continuous "Tinker to Evers to Chance" action followed. The first principal was the constable, the second, one of the several justices of the peace and "Chance" representing the Ballston jail. This they say became a "racket" for putting small but supposedly legal sums into the pockets of certain minions of the law. However, this finally became one of the objectionable features which threw the town and village political administration into the hands of a new party which governed for many years. The tramps too, liked the game, some returning time and again for free board at Ballston Jail, as the weather grew cold.

Probably all have noticed that this tramp nuisance has now disappeared. We shall not discuss what feature of national life, or what change in national politics has effected this change for the better.

Waterford, over the years, has been well served by one or more constables. We recall that one of these, "Picky" Curtis, was not a tiny man. In our boyhood days he was "beat up" by out of town thugs. A few Waterfordians dashed to Picky's aid that late Saturday night and were later filled with pride over the enemy's sudden retreat.

When the barge canal was being built, trouble arose between the contractors and the laborers. The "padrone" a self appointed agent, hired and delivered to the builders, alien or foreign help. Probably the padrone had deceived his hired workers about the monetary terms of the canal job. At any rate the laborers became very angry (at the wrong people, the villagers) and paraded our streets armed with clubs. Close to a hundred deputy sheriffs coming from Ballston and hereabouts, quickly calmed the mob.

Another episode concerned a trolley strike which took place

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

September 18-30, 1902. This strike affected the 100 mile Hudson Valley trolley lines, and when strikebreakers entered the scene it became almost a riot. A deputy riding a trolley shot an innocent Waterford delivery boy<sup>3</sup> with a pistol, and after that the National Guard was called to duty.

An affray took place at the head of Third Street. Here well aimed bricks were thrown which hurt the strikebreaking motorman, then called a "fink." The guardsmen, one of whom was also hurt, near the stopped trolley, then popped into action. We saw an officer draw his sword (which weapons we heretofore understood were made of "tin")<sup>4</sup> and slash a man down through his Sunday derby, cutting his head. This settled in our mind the physical composition of that sword.

After witnessing this rough work your author withdrew to a reserved seat at the high railroad embankment to the west.

When the militia Captain finally gave the order to "fire" we quickly rolled down the peaceful side of the bank and went home to good old Peebles Island.

Before we left, however, we noted that the crashing rifles had been aimed skyward. The region about the crossing then became "off limits" for all persons except travelers and up-the-road-residents. More calamity was to follow.

A traveler on horseback from the north, and no doubt unacquainted with our streets, was shunted by soldiers past Ford's mill and down toward lower Second Street. It being night and not knowing the way (nor about old "Stink" creek), both he and his horse tumbled off the short railroad creek bridge to the dirty waters below. Both were killed.

Then, a night or so later, the tower man guarding the railroad crossing with switches and levers, tossed a fast-moving freight from its tracks to save the lives of many soldiers aboard a trolley fast heading for a collision with the freight. The result was an awful mess of freight cars. No deaths occurred.

Apart from such strike disturbances the people of Waterford

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Curtin.

<sup>4</sup> The National Guardmen in earlier days, were quite unfairly called "Tin Soldiers (from this the "tin" sword).

have generally been peaceful and law abiding. This is shown by the fact that the first Waterford murder was committed no less than two hundred and thirty years after our inception. One, William Vanderwerker, in a drunken frenzy, and absolutely without cause, used a shotgun to kill Trackmaster Harrison Sherman of the Rensselaer-Saratoga Railway as he stepped from his home on July 27, 1860. Sherman was loved by Waterfordians and the murderer twice escaped lynching through the efforts of Sheriff B. Powell. Such a wanton crime gave great impetus and growth to the local temperance cause whose leaders called the saloons "Grog Holes." One thousand Waterfordians requested by petition, fewer liquor licenses and the closing of the saloons on Sundays.

Of course Waterford also had its minor crime waves as far back as March 12, 1834 when a "Society for the Prevention of Petty Thefts" was organized in the Village.

Waterford's constables have usually changed with election day. A popular War I veteran, John F. Harney, however, survived all such changes for a period of 27 years until 1954. During his term of office, higher methods of police surveillance were instituted together with liaison or cooperation with nearby cities. This with a prowler car raised our police work to a modern plane. In addition, Police Chief Harney, under State authority, organized our younger men into a uniformed and excellent Civil Defense Corps which became a model for other similar county agencies.

After a short respite from police work Chief Harney again returned to duty on January 1, 1956.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

### OBSERVANCE OF CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF 1776

AT THE STROKE of midnight on the 31st of December 1875 the people of the Town of Waterford rang all the bells, set off fireworks and illuminated their homes, followed by a torchlight parade, to celebrate the Centennial year observance of our national independence. Later a Centennial Tea Party was given by the ladies of the Episcopal Church. In this event the original thirteen States were each represented by a booth.

This historic event brought into being throughout our country hundreds of histories, and historical sketches. For this real service to our nation whereby much history was preserved, we historians are indebted to President Ulysses S. Grant who issued the following resolution which was passed by Congress on May 13, 1876, "It is hereby recommended to the people of the several states that they assemble in their counties and towns on the approaching Centennial Anniversary of our National Independence, and that they cause to have delivered on such day an historical sketch of said county or town from its formation, and that a copy of said sketch be filed, in manuscript, in the clerk's office of said county,<sup>1</sup> and an additional copy be filed in the office of the Library of Congress, to the intent that a complete record may thus be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first centennial of their existence."

Observing the considerable number of histories published in 1876 and puzzled by this fact, our search revealed that Arthur H. Masten<sup>2</sup> had written the History of Cohoes, December 1876 and had published that book in conformity with Grant's resolution and was frank enough to give the reason for his work in the book's introduction.

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<sup>1</sup> Waterford's 1876 Manuscript could not be found at Ballston Spa in 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur H. Maston of Cohoes was the son of James H. Masten, Editor of the *Waterford Sentinel*, commenced in 1859.

## OUR FIRST COURTS, LAWYERS AND POLITICS

A bit of reflection shows that the Law, generally described as a dry subject, is the ultimate conservator of the rights and liberties of our citizens. This of course considers the law in its highest plane, without regard to early legal practices (not entirely extinct) of using obscure terms which resulted in the common reader being utterly unable to decipher the true meaning and scope of some far reaching legislative measure or the like.

This feature of legal practice is very old and aroused in the minds of the average citizens a certain distrust. The English Blackstone brought out in 1765 his *Commentaries*, a handbook of the law for laymen. It was well regarded in England and by 1773 it had a Philadelphia reprint. This new issue drew from a Philadelphia merchant the fitting remark that "a Professor of Oxford, has brought that Mysterious Law Business to some System."<sup>3</sup>

The law did not burst into full bloom in this locality. Printer Sylvester Tiffany of Lansingburg in 1794, was publishing his small law book, "Vade Mecum" (Walk with me!). It was advertised as a young clerk's magazine and was crowded full of legal terms and lore. In fact in its 346 pages, of a book four inches by six, it shows all the laws then in use in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

The first judicial system of Saratoga County was cumbersome and founded upon that of England, at a time when the courts of the State operated under the constitution of 1777. Under this system, the common law, when not conflicting with a statute, was the law of the State. The New York Constitution of 1777 provided for a "Court of Errors," composed of the Lieut. Governor, the Senators, the Chancellor and the Judges of the Supreme Court. This Court of Errors had jurisdiction of impeachments, and general revision, by appeal of the courts below.

The "Courts of Chancery" came next, having exclusive control of all cases in equity. Following came the "Supreme Court of Judicature," consisting of a chief justice and three junior judges, who heard appeals from the lower courts.

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<sup>3</sup> *History of American Life*, Schlesinger & Fox.

<sup>4</sup> The author, Thomas Spence, Albany, 1794, p. A1.

There was also the "Circuit Court" held in different counties at least once in each year, presided over by a judge of the Supreme Court, and empowered to try all issues at law and give judgement thereon.

In each county there was a "Court of Common Pleas," consisting of a first judge and three other judges, having the power both to try and to determine according to law, all actions, real, personal, and such as debtor cases, which arose in the respective counties.

The criminal branch of the courts consisted of an "Oyer & Terminer" held by a first judge (or a Judge of Common Pleas) and at least three commissioned justices of the peace of the county. This court had jurisdiction of all crimes, treasons and felonies.

Finally came the "Court of General Sessions" held by any three of the justices of the peace of the county. Always present in this court was a judge of the Common Pleas.

This court handled criminal and other cases, and also had jurisdiction of all actions relating to slaves, servants, and apprentices.

It was the most ancient of all the courts being first instituted under the Colonial Assembly of 1683.

The first Board of Supervisors of Saratoga County met June 2, 1791 when only four towns: Saratoga, Ballston, Halfmoon and Stillwater were in the county. The absolute first official question and action of that board was, "How much money do you have for Saratoga?" and was addressed to the former Sheriff of Albany county, John Ten Broeck. Halfmoon's first supervisor seems to have been Benjamin Rosekrans.

To become an attorney in those early days it was necessary to show a certificate of admission to the Supreme Court (requiring seven years law service) or a certificate of three years clerkship with some attorney and also undergo a rigid examination.

The state was represented, then as now, in the courts by an attorney general, and for the people in the Oyer and Terminer or Sessions, by the district attorney.

Saratoga county was placed upon a firm judicial footing when Governor Clinton appointed among others, "Halfmoon's" Jacobus Van Schoonhoven, for the first session of the court of Common Pleas



held on May 10, 1791. On its first minutes, is the admission to law practice of his son Guert. At the same time Major Ezra Buell a daring and useful Revolutionary Scout from Stillwater<sup>5</sup> was appointed "Crier" of the court. The Major served the court for forty-two years and as he grew old and went to sleep in the court, they recalled his war service and forgave him.

There were no court buildings in those early days. The first Circuit Court and Oyer and Terminer session was held in Halfmoon Precinct on July 7, 1791 at the home of Jedediah Rogers and many other sessions were held in the "church" at Stillwater, in the Presbyterian and the "Red" church in Ballston. In one of these church court sessions at Ballston Centre, Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr met as opposing counsel in an action.<sup>6</sup>

Four years were to pass before the first courthouse was completed on Court House Hill, a Ballston hamlet, two and a half miles southwest of the county seat.

When the location of a "shire" town was being considered, "the most important place in the county was Half Moon Point (now Waterford)."<sup>7</sup>

However, its extremity from the center of the county eliminated it from final consideration as an administrative seat. This same reason disposed of both Stillwater and Schuylerville, the latter place then the home of John Bradstreet Schuyler, a legally active son of the patriot general.

Ballston, then called the "Centre," was therefore selected. The first courthouse was adjacent to the jail and was burned down on March 24, 1816 by prisoners attempting to burn their way from jail. One of the latter, disliked and chained to the floor by an inhuman jailer, was consumed by the flames. In those days jailers were scarce. This was once corrected by handcuffing twelve prisoners together around a tree while their constable hitched up the team to take them away.

We have devoted some detail in this court and law section to establish important changes in our early court system, this record

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<sup>5</sup> *Bench and Bar*, Mann, 1876, p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> Saratoga County, *The Saratogan*, 1899, p. 41.

<sup>7</sup> *Bench and Bar*, E. R. Mann, 1876, p. 25.

being found to be quite hazy in the minds of some young lawyers. By a constitutional change in 1821, the Supreme Court was restricted to appellate jurisdiction, the state then being divided into eight circuits, each presided over by a "Circuit Judge." To such were given all powers formerly held by the Supreme Court Judges. The same constitutional authority also provided for the election by the people, of Justices of the Supreme Court. The last old court of Oyer<sup>8</sup> and Terminer, held in Saratoga county under the constitution of 1821, was convened in May 1847. Circuit Judges, however, held later courts of Oyer and Terminer, until Jan. 1, 1896.

The Legislature of 1814 and the constitution of 1821 provided that Court of Sessions "be holden" by the Judges of Common Pleas. This operation of 1821 continued until the constitution of 1846 became effective. Then both the Court of Common Pleas and the Court of General Sessions were abolished and the county courts reorganized instead. The last meeting of The Court of Sessions and Common pleas was held in April 1847, the constitution of that year going into effect on July 1, 1847.

A further revision of the judicial system in January 1896 abolished the former Circuit Court, merging this into what became part of our present Supreme Court.

Many legal lights came from our place from 1779 to 1862 when it was first Halfmoon and later Waterford.

A number of these men, meeting the needs of their day were both lawyers and surveyors. To be able to accurately survey a place and then write correct legal papers concerning it was indeed giving the people a full and complete service.

While the lapse of time has cast its shadows about them and their fame, we bring the names of those obtainable as honored Waterfordians of olden times.

Of those lawyers now practicing, in 1955, are they not still writing their own pages of history?

*Judges of Common Pleas:* Jacobus Van Schoonhoven 1791, Dr. John Stearns 1809, Samuel Drake 1811, Abraham Moe 1813-1818,

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<sup>8</sup> Oyer, to hear; Terminer, to determine.

Nicholas B. Doe 1826, James VanSchoonhoven 1820, Guert Van Schoonhoven 1823, Joshua Mandeville 1846.

*State Senators:*<sup>9</sup> Anthony Van Schaick 1779-1780, Jacobus Van Schoonhoven 1794 and 1805, Dr. John Stearns 1810-1813, Samuel Stewart 1814 1817, Guert Van Schoonhoven 1815, John L. Viele 1822-1826-7-8-9, John Cramer 1823-4-5.

*Representative in Congress:* John Cramer 1833-1837, Nicholas B. Doe 1840-41, Chesselden Ellis 1843-45, Hugh White 1845-1851.

*Members of Assembly (Constitution of 1777):* Jacob Fort Jr. 1780-1781 and 1782-2-3-4-5, Jacobus Van Schoonhoven 1786-1791, Benjamin Rosekrans 1792, John Cramer 1806-11, '42, Zebulon Mott 1812, '17-21, William Hamilton 1816, '19, Abraham Moe 1820, John House 1821.

*Constitution of 1821:* Nicholas B. Doe 1825, Eli M. Todd 1828-'34, Joshua Mandeville 1829, Samuel Stewart 1830, John Stewart 1840, Dr. Chauncey Boughton 1846-58-59, Thos. C. Morgan 1847.

*Constitution of 1848:* John Fulton 1860-61-62.

### WATERFORD POLITICS

Waterford in the early 1800's was a renowned training place for lawyers. Among these was General Edward Fitch Bullard (of the Schuylerville Bullards), who later was a member of Congress. Bullard at the early age of seventeen years began legal training in the law offices of Waterford's John Cramer and Judge Chesselden Ellis. Another Waterford bright legal light was Judge John K. Porter. Both Bullard and Porter later met in 1846 at a legal tangle at Ballston. Young Bullard was said to have had an almost unrivaled capacity to formulate and present a most difficult case, while Judge Porter who also began his legal training in Waterford at the age of eighteen years later became a special United States Prosecutor and helped convict the President Garfield slayer, Guiteau.

Both these celebrities collided in the celebrated Captain Isaiah Rynders case which was heavily tinged with politics.

Isaiah Rynders, a New York river boat Captain whose parents, sister, and brother lived in Waterford, was interested in the Democratic side of the Clay-Polk presidential campaign of 1844. Rynders

<sup>9</sup> *Bench and Bar*, Saratoga County, E. R. Mann, 1876, p. 385.



brought with him to Waterford, two alleged members of the famous Democratic "Empire Club" of New York. His companions both prize-fighters together with Rynders' brother James, attended a Waterford political town rally. A street fight took place afterward whereupon a Whig and Irish husky named Atkinson knocked down both James Rynders and the two prize-fighters with a sledge hammer. Before the sledge wielder reached Captain Isaiah, the latter drew and fired a pistol, but lost its holster.

Both Rynders and his brother were finally brought to trial in 1846 for riot and assault with a deadly weapon. Bullard was defending counsel with Porter (and the Whigs) for the prosecution. Porter asked Bullard which indictment he wished to try first. Bullard promptly (and with premeditation) replied that he preferred the riot charge. The jury retired and after testimony Captain Isaiah Rynders was fined \$100.00 for rioting.

Prosecutor John K. Porter then moved for the trial of the Captain for assault with intent to kill, the lost holster being brought forth as part evidence. As the same testimony was being repeated Bullard suddenly raised the constitutional objection that a person cannot twice be tried for the same offense or act and stated that Rynders had already suffered the penalty of the law for the offense.

Prosecutor John K. Porter was astounded by the turn of events and more so when Judge Marvin upheld the objection and discharged Rynders.

Concerning the characters in this legal drama it may be said that both contesting lawyers were young, Bullard being 25 years of age and Porter 27.<sup>10</sup>

Captain Isaiah Rynders was not a bad man. He seems to have been a born political worker and was a magnetic speaker. He was later Marshal of a New York district and held other lucrative offices.

A legal author, describing Rynders also stated that he was kind and generous to his parents, supporting them in their last years.<sup>11</sup>

One of Waterford's earliest political meetings took place at "Schoonhoven's Hotel," presumably the Eagle Tavern where the

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<sup>10</sup> *History of Saratoga County*, 1609-1878, Nathaniel Sylvester, pp. 199-243.

<sup>11</sup> *Bench and Bar*, Saratoga County, E. R. Mann, 1876, pp. 89.

Saratoga County Federal Republicans met on April 18, 1808 to discuss "Jefferson's Embargo." Both England and France had interdicted trade with the other which affected our trading vessels. Since this subjected them to capture, Jefferson's decree in requital was ruinous to shipping. All Waterford's "great men" were said to have signed their names against Jefferson's decree and proposed to vote against it.<sup>12</sup>

The great inconvenience of traveling the distance to various meetings in the large Precinct of Halfmoon was endured until 1816 when the Town of Waterford was organized.

In that year John Cramer was the first Supervisor, but the Town records rescued from the burning office in July of 1841 by Town Clerk M. C. Powell, have since been lost. The first complete list of Town Offices (from the Saratoga County Clerk)<sup>13</sup> was for the year 1832, when the Supervisor was Eli M. Todd, Town Clerk John Cramer (2nd), and Tunis Vanderwerker, Collector.

In the year 1828 a law was passed requiring that the Justices of the Peace be elected by the people. Joseph H. Cudworth was the first Justice so elected. The old records have been burned or lost and nothing could be found to indicate what party or parties once controlled Waterford.

About the year 1900 the Democratic party was said to have controlled both Waterford Town and Village governments. The late James A. Glavin, Sr. was then Town Supervisor and was described as a fine type of citizen, while the late Anthony Weaver served several terms as Village President.

Both of these men were popular among the people and served repeatedly.

Then, as is quite inevitable, the political trend changed and three Republican Supervisors, namely Harry Davidson, Harry Holmes and Fred Steenbergh held office consecutively.

Once again the political pendulum swung and a political group with a new name the "Citizens" Party entered into power in 1921 for the long space of thirty-one years.

Angus Garrett of the Northside was Waterford's Supervisor for

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<sup>12</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, June 8, 1860.

<sup>13</sup> *History of Saratoga County*, Sylvester, p. 327.

all that long period. The local papers at Mr. Garrett's death declared the Citizen's Party was believed to be the oldest reform party in the State.

The same obituary notice continued the statement that under Mr. Garrett's administration, no town taxes ever existed. It said that he operated the Town on the money received in the sharing of "state taxes." Hot and furious have been the arguments between the long ousted Republicans and the spokesmen for the Citizen's Party. Some say that repeated Citizen's victories have been gained by the help of Republicans voting with the Citizens, while the Republicans retaliated by saying that the popular Mr. Garrett was always assured of victory by a large plurality from his native Northside. At any rate Angus Garrett was honest, blunt and straightforward and worked upward to popularity from the age of twelve when he was forced to leave school.<sup>14</sup> The Garrett Field, a large playground northeast of the Northside was created in his memory.

During much of Supervisor Garrett's long term of service J. Edward Burgess was a respected and fair Justice of the Peace and a member of the Town Council. He accordingly had gained a precise knowledge of Town government. Also under New York State's law being Deputy Supervisor, he immediately became Waterford's Supervisor upon Mr. Garrett's death on May 13, 1952.

November of 1952 was a Presidential election year and the people of Waterford were also to vote for a Supervisor. Since the Republicans had first place on the voting machines, the Citizen's Party leader, John A. Murray, conceded that the Citizens were entering the election under a handicap. The election resulted in Mr. Burgess's defeat which confirmed Mr. Murray's fears.

John W. Newland of the Northside then became Supervisor for the year 1953. In the Town election for Supervisor for the years 1944-1955. J. Edward Burgess was again elected as Supervisor and served with distinction and fairness as he saw the issues.

Town Clerk Joseph Schofield died in office. His 1952 term was completed by Charles (Chick) Burns and John W. Egleston respec-

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<sup>14</sup> *Troy Record*, May 15, 1952.



tively. Republican Arthur R. Anderson was then elected Town Clerk for the year 1953 and again for the years 1954 and 1955.

Arthur ("Buzz") Anderson, War II veteran and prominent in Waterford affairs, expanded the duties of the Town Clerk's office far beyond the requirements of the law. For example it was stated that during his three years in office with his wife Bette's help as Assistant Town Clerk, over \$175,000.00 in Saratoga County automobile registration fees was collected.

His work doubtless had a considerable effect on the 1955 November election when Republican Arthur R. Anderson was pitted against Citizen's Party J. Edward Burgess for the office of Supervisor for the years of 1956-1957. The whole Republican ticket was elected with the exception of Town Clerk candidate Frederick H. Bessette who was defeated by Ernest R. Thouin.

The office of village President or Mayor pays no salary and has generally escaped the heat of political battle. Popularity or willingness to serve, however, is a strong factor in electing a President.<sup>15</sup> For example the late John Walsh was repeatedly elected until he had served 25 years in that office.

He was succeeded by President Carl Sorensen who was first elected as a Citizen's Party candidate on October 1, 1947.

Sorensen in 1956 has served for 9 years. Village elections occur in April and the officials now serve two year terms in lieu of one year by an amendment passed in 1951 by the Legislature.

The modern voting machines have in one respect brought the business of voting to a somewhat higher plane than when the voting was done with the paper ballot. The voter then it is said had to fold the ballot correctly, and in the same manner as it was handed to him. Marking with a pencil too had hazards since the ballot might be cut with a sharp point.

The place where the booths were located was also disturbing to the voter who naturally wished to vote secretly.

One voter, now deceased, told the following story. He said the polling place was then on the second floor of the old Waterford Town Hall.

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<sup>15</sup> This official is called President as per 1794 Village Charter but Mayor as per recent New York State Law.

Directly over the booths was the curving balcony. Looking up one day as he was marking his paper ballot the citizen noted a number of loiterers directly over his head sitting in the balcony and apparently taking note of how he was voting. This was the last time our voter permitted this indignity. On next election day he came equipped with a large umbrella which he unfurled over his head during the operation of voting. We know this man regarded voting as almost a sacred privilege and frequently "took election day off" and after voting, walked with his boys, in the country.

## CHAPTER THIRTY

### WATERFORD TYPE ARCHITECTURE AND OLD HOMES

WATERFORD village has a distinctive type of brick architecture of which we can be proud. This brick construction is described by an authority as being "Post Colonial" or "Federal," reflecting both Greek and Roman influence.<sup>1</sup> Early Waterford papers describe General Samuel Stewart as being the architect. One of the earliest known out of town examples of this style is the old Lansing house near 110th Street, North Troy beside the Hudson river.

John Vrooman in his *Forts and Firesides* writes that this Lansingburg home was probably erected about 1743.

The indicative feature of the Waterford type is the "stepped coping" at the top ends of the houses. These end walls also include the chimneys which vary in number from two to four.

Professor Hamlin, a noted authority of Columbia University, offers the suggestion that these stepped end walls probably descended from the old Dutch "crow-step" gables.

In short this practical method of brick laying does away with the necessity of cutting the brick to match the gables and provides a safe run off for rain and snow.

Another characteristic feature is the presence of one or more artistic windows which are located in the upper part of the end walls, which carry light to the top sections of the house. One observant resident of Waterford quite naturally calls these attractive openings, "Halfmoon" windows.<sup>2</sup>

These Post Colonial homes were erected in the early 1800's, and are becoming rare. Some remain in Massachusetts, particularly the Starbuck home in Nantucket. One or two can be found on Manhattan Island.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Author John Vrooman

2 By Rev. David Huntington.

3 Talbot Hamlin, Columbia University.



DUTCH BRICK (POST - COLONIAL ) HOMES.



GENERAL STEWART HOME (MASONIC TEMPLE) BUILT 1802 (Michon photo)



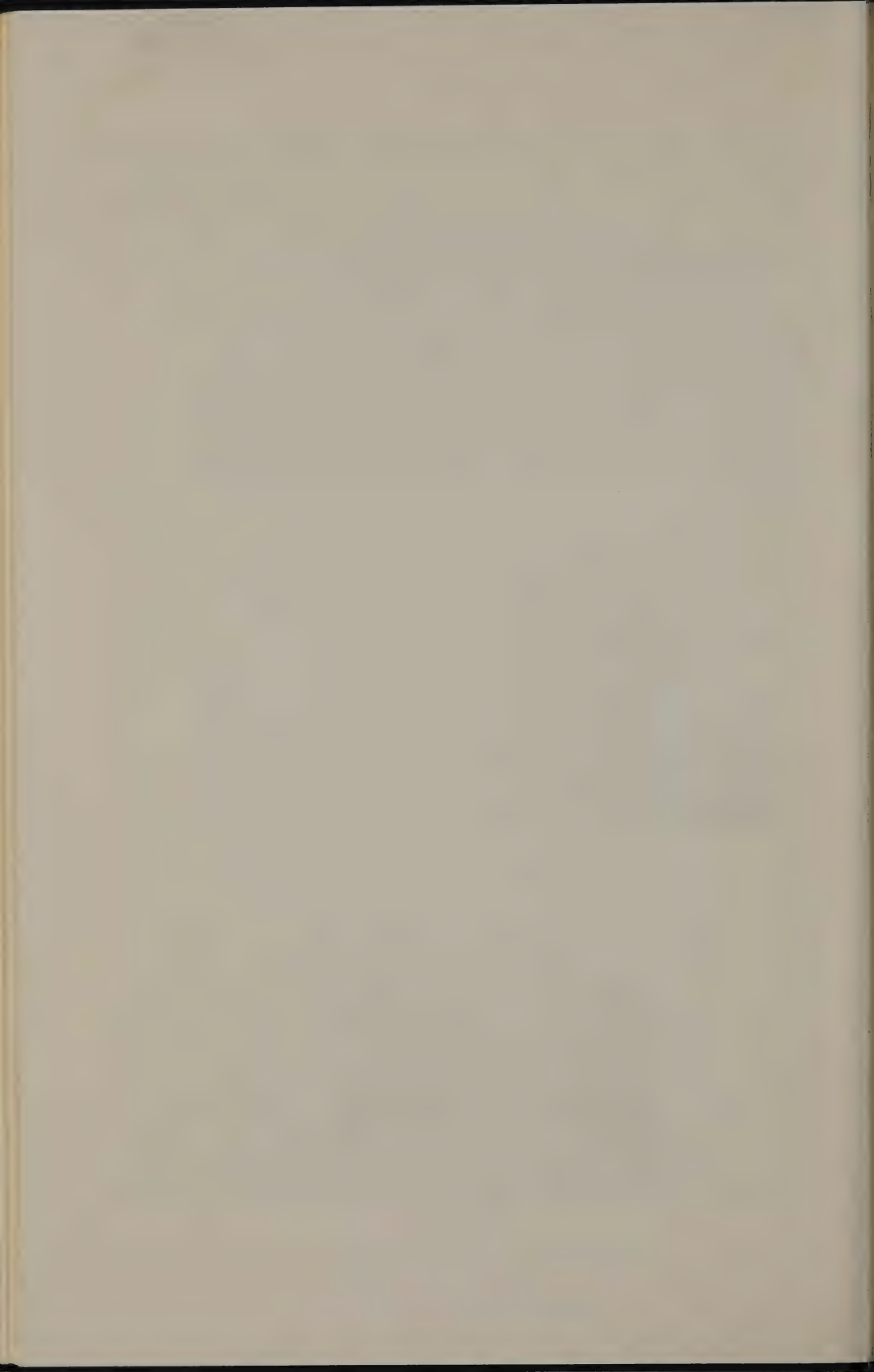
VAN ALSTYNE, -AMSDEN, -MANDEVILLE, -PRUYN, -PORTER, -& O'CONNOR HOME.

MICHON PHOTO.



HAMMERSLEY

HUTCHINSON-DAVIS HOME, WATERFORD'S OLDEST FRAME DWELLING.  
TORN DOWN IN 1956



Locally, one appears here and there in Lansingburg and Troy. Waterford, however, can boast of at least twenty-six of these substantial houses in what was Halfmoon Point and is now the village of Waterford.

These buildings were once palatial Waterford Homes, the symbol of the wealth once prevalent here. The basements of some had fireplaces and Dutch ovens, with living and sleeping quarters for the slaves. This provided a sense of privacy for the owners.

One building, now the Masonic Temple, is chosen as a representative of the other twenty-five homes. This, once the home of General Stewart, was built in 1802. The brick came, it is said, as sailing vessel ballast from Holland.

In 1676 our country was a heavy exporter, its ships coming back without cargo but with millions of bricks as ballast. Disposing of the bricks was a sea shore problem. The ship crews just tossed them into the harbor, giving rise to the Duke of York's laws of 1676. The penalty was a fine of fifty pounds sterling for tossing the ballast overboard. In the South the fine was 2000 pounds of tobacco.<sup>4</sup>

Since General Stewart was a sloop owner with his ships going to New York, and further we having a 244 foot landing pier at the "Battery," a seemingly good disposition of the Holland brick was found. He built his brick home with rooms in the basement as described above. On the other floors were fireplaces in each room. On one of these appears a carved bust of Alexander Hamilton, a reputed guest at this historic home. The bricks are laid in Flemish bond.

In the early 1800's Waterford was in its greatest era of prosperity. Our residents with their grist mills and shops worked diligently. Wealth and these substantial homes were a result.

Some of these houses like the Stewart home had nearby small structures built of brick. These were "offices" for the reception of incoming goods, the idea doubtless following the English caretakers houses. One of these Stewart brick "reception" buildings became Dr. Stubb's medical office.

To permit identification of other "Post Colonial" buildings we give the names of some of the original owners such as the Isaac

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<sup>4</sup> *Why Bricks Were Imported*, Charles E. Peterson.



Eddy house, northeast corner Middle and Third Streets—the Dr. Boughton house, northeast corner Second and Middle Streets—the Dr. Harold Peckham home southwest corner of Third and Division Streets.

These buildings represent Waterford when it was in its ascendancy, when learning was becoming highly valued and correct living was distinguished by its simplicity.

The General GUERT VAN SCHOONHOVEN MANSION built close to the end of the 18th century deserves notation, because it was thoroughly rooted in Waterford life while that was in its prime. For the many close-up views of old Waterford buildings and civic life, we are indebted to a modest and anonymous author who wrote in 1886.<sup>5</sup>

"Accepting your invitation—herewith are some pen pictures of men and times, fast fading from public memory, and soon to be covered by the grandeur of greater achievements of later generations." About the Waterford Van Schoonhoven place he writes—"Guert Van Schoonhoven allied himself by marriage with a Miss Davis living at Poughkeepsie. The Davis's were wealthy and Guert was enabled to build a house, the finest residence in the country at that time." The building was of a substantial character and was built of heavy wood and even the interior stairway was held together by hand forged nails<sup>6</sup> 3½ inches long with heads one inch in diameter.

The Mansion, later known as the Page Place, was the Frank A. Dunn home when destroyed by fire. It was west of St. Mary's Church and in the rear of the Burton Smith and Joseph Douglass 1955 homes. The Mansion was a happy meeting place where the receptions were brilliant and the guest distinguished.

Here Waterfordians met Governor DeWitt Clinton where with others he arranged for Emma Willard's Seminary to come to Waterford. The familiar lines,—

"From rise of morn, till set of sun  
I have seen the mighty Mohawk run!"

were part of Sir Thomas Moore's ode to the Cohoes Falls and were

<sup>5</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, May 7, 1886.

<sup>6</sup> Given by Willard Holcomb, 1954 (Mr. Holcomb disassembled the building after the 1932 fire).

written here when he was a guest at the mansion in 1804. Far more beautiful, however, is his own "Bendemeer's Stream,"<sup>7</sup> a prime favorite of this author.

The great house had twenty rooms and its fireplaces, following the custom of these better built homes, were in the center of the rooms. Such buildings, however, are difficult to adapt to modern life and customs. The great house took fire when unoccupied on July 31, 1932, and was destroyed. The Carriage house on Seventh street, now Laware's store, still remains.

An old HOLLAND BRICK HOME, the Van Alstyne house, was another of the two buildings stated in all the old records as having its brick brought as ballast from Holland. It was built in 1812 at a cost of \$15,000.00 and its construction took two years. Its later owners were Manley Amsden, Judge Mandeville, Mrs. Pruyn, and Judge John K. Porter. When occupied by the Mandevilles it was one of the social centers of old Waterford. It has been torn down and was replaced by the Texaco gasoline station at the northwest corner of Third and Division Streets.

The GROUT HOUSE on First Street, said to have been built in 1784, is another old dwelling and was built by the maternal grandfather of a Mrs. Rebecca Grout and not by a Mr. Knickerbacker as commonly asserted in Waterford.

This dwelling once had the quaint Dutch doors which were halved, allowing the top half to swing inward giving the housewife a view of the visitor before admittance. These doors during modernization, were removed.

### WATERFORD'S OLDEST FRAME DWELLING

The author believes this to have been the quaint old Davis house first owned by a Mr. Hutchinson. It became the farm homestead of the Davis family whose land ran towards Cohoes along the old glacial swamps, east of the old Champlain canal. Davis's land embraced also "Gageville" near the Mohawk, a manufacturing spot.

A large orchard occupied "Dial City" and some of the Davis family are said to be buried beneath the Eddy Valve works. The

<sup>7</sup> From the *Veiled Prophet of Khorassan*, pp. 95-96 in Lalla Rookh (by Thos. Moore).

original manufacturer George Eddy, refrained making excavation for his plant in respect for the dead.

The search for the age records of the Davis building<sup>8</sup> led to Chicago but the new owners of the Eddy Valve company at that city could not supply the missing data.

### CLASSIC HALL

This Waterford landmark at 48 First Street is one of our oldest. Doubtless built in 1813 according to a top-door stone, it ranks with the General Stewart building in 1802.

Both brick buildings are laid in Flemish bond. Classic Hall's tower, having an abbreviated appearance, is said to have been burned off during the great fire of 1841. At that time it was reported as being a public school building.

No structure in our village has given more public service than our Classic Church.

Called the Classical Institute in 1832-33 it was a college for young men and administered by Thomas Farnham of Union College. Its tuition fee for the three "R's" was \$3.00, English, Grammar and Geography for \$4.00 and "Higher Education" for \$5.00 at a time when Waterford had four private schools.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to serving both as a church and educational center it was also a meeting place for dances and various entertainments sharing these with the Brewster or Howard House built about 1812 or earlier.

In 1847 when the present Knickerbocker Steamer House was built, somehow Classic Hall bore the Knickerbocker name too. In 1860<sup>10</sup> Village President D. B. King fitted up the place as a Free Sports Hall for young men.

The name stone above the door bearing the title "Classic Hall, Conditum 1813" together with a Latin inscription has aroused both interest and discussion. Doubtless this discussion is attached to the word "Conditum" since the interpreted Latin line "*Let This Be a Monument More Lasting Than Bronze*" was not difficult to decipher.

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<sup>8</sup> Torn down in 1956.

<sup>9</sup> *Waterford Union* and *Waterford Atlas* of 1832-1833.

<sup>10</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, Feb. 26, 1860.





CLASSIC HALL, 1813



Waterfordians are used to believing that this inscription is dedicated to education and seemingly it fits well.

The building has been used since 1919 for manufacturing purposes. Anna Breen started the factory and supervised it until 1934. In that year The Jones Company bought the property for the manufacture of children's dresses.

### THE OLD VAN ALSTYNE HOUSE (Judge J. G. Porter's)

This staunch Holland brick home was erected by Lawyer Daniel Van Alstyne in 1812 at the north-west corner of Third and Division Streets. The site is now occupied by Thomas Dyer's Texaco gasoline station. After Van Alstyne's death his widow married Manley Amsden. Amsden was first a school teacher and later became a prominent Waterfordian. His past has in 1955-1956, been the subject of an extended Illinois search. He and the old brick house were frequently mentioned in a New Hampshire diary. The author Colbee C. Benton, visited the Waterford Amsden couple in 1833 and describes the house's massive beams and the beautiful furniture which was in the "richest old Dutch style."<sup>11</sup> The home was a "great wonder" to the diaryist.

Manley Amsden after the death of his wife, sold the building to Judge Joshua Mandeville. The Judge, whose father was a Revolutionary officer, lived in Waterford<sup>12</sup> for 60 years and as a young man had entered General Van Schoonhoven's law office at the age of 16 years to study law. Mrs. Pruyn, who had an ample fortune, next owned the building until it was sold to Judge J. G. Porter.

After Judge Porter died the stately mansion was owned and occupied by James O'Connor. Sometime later the building was torn down, its demolition being greatly deplored because of its Holland brick and origin.

This demolished structure in 1956 is again belatedly bemoaned by those who would now like to have it as a historical center and a museum.

<sup>11</sup> *Granite State Free Press*, Lebanon, N. H., Feb. 21, 1873, data from J. R. Getz, Lake Forest, Ill.

<sup>12</sup> *New York Observer*, May 12, 1860, and *Waterford Sentinel*, June 16, 1860.



## THE DEMAREST-JUDGE CHEEVER HOME

Samuel Demarest our local orator was the owner and keeper of a large brick hotel on the site of what later became known as the "Morgan" House. The Demarest place, also the first site of Emma Willard's Seminary in New York State, was burned during the great Waterford fire of 1841. Demarest having a considerable fortune built a great house on the "hill" near the site of old St. Mary's Church. It was of such magnitude that it became known as "Demarest's Folly" among certain Waterfordians. Judge Cheever later occupied the building and after that his daughter, Mrs. McIntyre, lived there. It was later torn down. Judge Cheever had a son possessed of a bold nature. He started for Albany in a row boat and met an obstacle in the form of the Troy State dam on the Hudson. Nothing daunted, young Cheever deliberately sailed over the dam to be nearly drowned in the upset which followed. Pulled to shore and resuscitated by nearby rivermen he bailed out his craft and continued on his trip to 5 miles below Albany.

## THE WATERFORD OLD LADIES HOME

This neat brick building on the north-west corner of Second and Division Streets provided a restful solace for aged people for many years. In the early 1900's its supervising matron was Mary Cannell.

It was erected years ago through the beneficence of a Waterford manufacturer Thomas Breslin, entirely due it is said, to Mrs. Breslin's anxiety for the aged.

Mrs. Breslin whose kindly nature was partly responsible for this home died on June 28, 1889.<sup>13</sup>

## THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH PARSONAGE

This brick building, if we are guided by its mission, was probably built in the early 1800's. It is located at No. 20 Third Street and it is now the residence of Mrs. Henry V. Button and family.

Before its modernization it had fireplaces and old Dutch ovens which indicated its existence in early days. Our earliest village map

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<sup>13</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, June 28, 1889.

shows it was located on lot No. 167 which lot also included the Reformed Dutch Church which was moved into the Village in 1799.

### THE COLONEL S. P. SMITH-WILBUR CANEY HOME

This solid cement house, with a brownstone appearance, was built shortly after the Civil War probably about 1875, by a crippled war veteran Colonel S. P. Smith at 64 First Street.

It has easily withstood all past floods and storms which often have taken a toll of the top end walls of the older and notable "Post-Federal" buildings in Waterford.

This was how our second greatest American was evaluated by a it is built upon solid rock, the sound Snake Hill shale which underlies most of Waterford. Its resistance to the ravages of time has aroused the interest of numerous building engineers since it is said to be the first poured concrete house in America.

Colonel Smith, its builder, was an intellectual. He studied the ancient wall of Jerusalem for a guide, and after removing some 3 or 4 feet of Waterford top soil, hand poured a Rosendale or an equivalent cement mixture down upon the solid base rock.

The structure has remained plumb all these years despite the nearby blasting effects of Hudson River dredging.

The "Mansard" upper part of the home is covered by imported German slate while both inner and outer doors are made of mahogany.

Our early Waterford critics called it a "mud house" and predicted its early downfall. It has however, survived them all.

The home is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Caney. Mr. Caney being a graduate R.P.I. engineer understands and esteems this rugged building.

### THE JAMES A. GLAVIN-C. A. BLEIBTREY AND SONS BUILDING

This old and well established business house at the north-east corner of Broad and Third Streets can be traced for over a century. The first obtainable reference says that in 1841 it was operated as a store by Henry Ten Broeck. The first record of ownership reports

that in 1873 it was owned by Hugh Conaughty and sold to Stephen Viele.

Then other owners, such as William Gordon, Arabella and Mary Anderson, appeared. It was next owned and occupied by former Waterford Supervisor James H. Glavin as a busy and hustling grocery center in 1901 or perhaps before.

Here a number of clerks bustled about daily supplying customers and delivery wagons on the road, delivery being the custom in those days, before the entry of the chain stores from whence you must now haul your own stuff.

These were also the thoroughgoing days, when James H. Glavin for example did not buy tea in small packages. This grocery owner tested each large batch of tea before acceptance, in cute little cups and boiling water. He also tested big firkins of butter with a special tool to discover if the butter was also good in the middle of the container as well as at the top.

This accounted for the popularity and longevity of the Glavin store, for he dealt in quality products.

After Mr. Glavin's death the building and store was purchased by Charles Bleibtrey & Sons who conducted the same high grade store which had existed for so many years. In addition to groceries Joseph Bleibtrey added meat to his quality products. He also had an auto delivery truck which feature gave the necessary competition to the invading chainstores which lacked this important service.

After many years of useful work the meat and grocery business was given up in 1955 upon the death of Joseph Bleibtrey.

### WATERFORD'S CENTURY OLD STORES

JOHN HIGGINS Drug Store can be called Waterford's pioneer store, its business name remaining for 112 consecutive years and still continuing. It also was solely conducted by the Higgin's family and his descendants for 106 years.

John Higgins came from England in 1837 and after working for a period with a New York druggist entered the United States Navy where he probably worked as a surgeon. In 1844 he came to Waterford where he established the Pharmacy that still bears his name. In 1873 his son-in-law, George H. Cole, entered the store partnership.



In 1897 Mr. Higgins, who bore the honorary name "Dr. Higgins," died. In 1908 George Cole died and a grandson of the founder, John G. Cole, operated this store until his death on November 20, 1950.

Evariste F. Roy then bought the store from the Cole estate, and operates this busy place as in days of old when its old familiar "mortar and pestle" indicated its mission.

The Higgins store has in years past graduated two good pharmacists who established drug stores in their own names. These were Waterford's W. Earl Lawrence and William Manion of Danemora.

L. H. VAN ARNUM Hardware Store closely presses the Higgins store for business continuity. It has done uninterrupted hardware business in Waterford but under different names for 146 years. It started operations in 1809 under S. Satterlee. In 1844 Daniel G. Smith bought the place and hired Ira Van Arnum as second clerk. Ira held his job from 1858 until 1877 when he bought the business, enlarged the quarters and restocked the store.

Ira's son Lewis S. Van Arnum succeeded father Ira and ran the concern until his death on March 20, 1930. Then Lewis H. Van Arnum, son of Lewis S., took over the concern, and made the store one of the most attractive in this area. Its neatness and fine arrangement of stock are unsurpassed and are the subject of compliments from Waterfordians and out-of-town visitors.

### WATERFORD'S EARLY HOTELS

We enter for the record and for older Waterford people, a short account of our earlier post bellum taverns, hostelryes or hotels so necessary for the people of bygone days. These are apart from the Revolutionary taverns mentioned elsewhere.

We are indebted to the late Mrs. John D. Sherer for the location of these sites. Not only were these houses useful to people traveling by stage but they made homes too for many rising young Waterford people without family ties.

The CITY HOTEL, also called "Foxes" later kept by Thomas Scott and "Picky" Woods was at No. 87 Broad Street. It was built of wood in 1784.

At "Foxes" Tavern in the 1890's occurred the famous Rynder's political battle. Captain Rynders, a sloop captain, living in Dial City imported to our village some political tactics and workers from New York City's "Empire Club." This brought on a riotous battle in which knives and pistols flourished. New York's habits were not popular here and Rynders' strategy failed. Rynders, however, had some good qualities. Years later seeing his defending Waterford lawyer upon the streets of New York, Rynders greatly surprised the successful defending jurist by suddenly paying him the long overdue bill of \$25.00 for legal fees for Rynder's Waterford escapade.

His sister Maria was a local character. She wore slacks, married nine husbands Hollywood fashion, was full of energy, spice, and pugilism and voted long before women's suffrage was the vogue.

She attended all fires with the men and distinguished herself by doing great service "on the brakes" (the hand-pumped fire engine) during the great fire of 1841. She lived to be at least 94 years old. She smoked a clay pipe and had great aiming skill while chewing tobacco.

The HOWARD HOUSE first called Brewster's, was at the present site of the 1955 Waterford Bank. It was built before 1812 and was the centering place for public and school meetings including Civil War ceremonies. The Waterford Bank robbers were first tried here. It burned in June 12, 1875.

The CLIFTON HOUSE was at No. 90 Broad Street. This place like the others was a meeting place for all the farmers and tradesmen bringing their produce to Waterford. Like the Morgan House which follows, it had large stables for horses and with its large dining hall it gave rest and refreshment to many people who were away from home.

The MORGAN HOUSE at No. 40 Broad Street was probably one of the best remembered meeting places. It was named after Colonel Thomas C. Morgan, a man militarily inclined who headed the 144th Regiment up to 1840.

In the rear was a great stable for horses and conveyances, which later became Storm's Livery Stable. From this place came the polished black "hacks" in a day when these were as important to life as autos

are now. In still earlier times this was the Demarest site where some say the Emma Willard Seminary was first located until the great fire of 1841 destroyed the building. The Morgan House building, a brick structure, is still standing in 1955.

The UNION HOUSE was located at the southeast corner of Broad and Fifth Streets. Practically nothing is known about this place or its transients. From its location, not far from the old Champlain canal, we suspect it may have been a bit down the social scale. Nearby we know were the stables for the mules which hauled the canal boats. However, on the ladder of human needs, it was as important as any of the other places.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

### THE CIVIL WAR

NEARLY a century has passed since our American brothers fought each other with such ferocity that nearly half a million died. This terrible score lacked only about eight per cent of equalling all the deaths of World Wars I and II. The high death battle count of the Civil War was due to the method of meeting and stopping massed attacks and the rather primitive medical days. The medical attention of Wars I and II was superb by contrast.

One might wonder how men could become reconciled to dying in such numbers. The answer is LOVE OF COUNTRY. As we review our own life and think upon our childhood days, the truth unfolds. What better patriotic start could one ask than to have the song and almost hymn, "My Country 'Tis of Thee" sung so often at school? Then come the impelling and thought provoking words, "Lives there a man with a soul so dead, that never to himself has said, THIS IS MY OWN AND NATIVE LAND." Next comes an event that was almost revered, our Memorial Day, the day for which school chorus singing was organized. At cemetery exercises we solemnly sang among the Grand Army men of Post Sheridan and Post Lyon, "What gilded tomb, or marble towers, tell to the world where sleep our dead?" These are some factors that help make an American.

Since excellent volumes have been written<sup>1</sup> upon the Civil War and by authors far more able, we shall limit this brief and local sketch to words taken from Waterford newspapers and contributions, together with our personal knowledge of two Waterford veterans who suffered in the terrible prisons of the Confederacy.

The clouds of the Civil War drifted slowly about Waterford. Our optimistic news editor refused until the very last to believe that war was coming.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce Catton, *Mr. Lincoln's Army* and *Stillness at Appomattox*.

The war proved too, that great statesmen like Lincoln are not regarded as great until some years after they are gone. In this peculiar fact are buried the mechanics of history. Old newspapers, in Waterford at least, had two editors, one generally a clergyman, who wrote most of the editorials. When at Chicago's "Wigwam," "Abram" Lincoln was chosen on the third ballot to be the Republican's candidate for President, one of these Waterford men wrote an editorial entitled "Ingratitude" and in it grieved that the "noblest Roman of them all," William H. Seward had not been nominated for President instead of Lincoln. That same writer,<sup>2</sup> who classed himself as an independent, said that the citizens of Chicago made capital for their local "pet" Lincoln, and continued that "the Chicago convention had perpetuated an act of political injustice." Lincoln, said the editor, had a limited education, he was poor, he adopted the profession of law and was a Captain of Volunteers in the Black Hawk War. He concluded by giving Lincoln's record in the Congress.

This was how our second greatest American was evaluated by a local news writer in 1860. That news editor too, some months later seemingly discovered that Lincoln's first name was not "Abram" but was Abraham and thereafter he so mentioned him.

Lincoln in this paper was not spoken of again for a full six months but it was noted in the meanwhile that Judge Stephen A. Douglas, "the Little Giant," had stopped long enough in Waterford on July 25, 1860 to shake hands with several of his Waterford friends as his train made a brief pause here.<sup>3</sup>

These were the "Torchlight" days in Waterford. Albany was so busy with torch orders that our wants could not be supplied. Waterford's Husted, Peters and Dummer, the first two being local hardware dealers,<sup>4</sup> filled the need by contracting to supply 5,000 torches for September 20th delivery. They were carried in a parade by the "Bell Ringers" who in their red capes made a spectacular showing. "LINCOLN ELECTED," was the news theme of November 10, 1860, the paper saying, "The battle has been fought and

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2 Editor, *Waterford Sentinel*, May 26, 1860.

3 Item, *Waterford Sentinel*, July 25, 1860.

4 Item, *Waterford Sentinel*, September 15, 1860.

Abraham Lincoln is to be the next President, in one of the greatest political revolutions since the organization of the government."

The editor asked after the secession of South Carolina, "Can the Union be dissolved?" and only admitted that the war was here after Fort Sumpter surrendered and President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers.

Guided by the call of our great President, Waterford observed a solemn Fast Day on January 4, 1861. All stores and places of business were closed and a church service held in the Presbyterian church. The Rev. Lewis H. Lee preached, asking that our national troubles "be placed before the great Ruler and Judge of all."<sup>5</sup>

"TO ARMS! TO ARMS!" was the war cry.<sup>6</sup> Waterfordians responded to it by calling a meeting at No. 2 Fire Engine Company's rooms to form a Company of Volunteers.

The Village Trustees also met and arranged for funds to give to the wives and children of the family men who had responded to the call.

The women of our village, always loyal and helpful, met to make bandages. All through this terrible war they worked unceasingly as the "Ladies Relief Society" for our fighting men, making a host of needed things.

The sum raised for those at home who now had no support, amounted close to \$10,000. Four dollars a week was given to dependent mothers and fifty cents for each minor child. Each departing soldier was given a five dollar gold piece.

WATERFORD VOLUNTEER COMPANY "A" of the Second Regiment was formed here consisting of 79 men with Jacob Yates as its Captain, James H. Brott as Lieutenant and Hiram Clute as Ensign. The troop which had been trained in Button & Blakes fire engine shop, was inspected by General Bullard who for the Town gave an American Flag to the Company, and a sword each to the top officers. The men left Waterford on May 9, 1861, after a large parade, for Camp Brintnall near Troy.

The parade was led across the Union Bridge by the Hon. John Cramer. Although then past 82 years of age, he had proved by his

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<sup>5</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, January 5, 1861.

<sup>6</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, April 23, 1861.



large gifts to be a most generous friend of the departing soldiers and he wished to march with them part way at least.

At Camp Brintnall with evening approaching, a sad discovery was made. No one in charge had thought of blankets for the soldiers. General Bullard, a lawyer who had studied law in Waterford, together with a number of citizens who were at the Camp, dashed back to Waterford. Going among our citizens they procured enough buffalo robes for the entire company. The regular blankets arrived next day.<sup>7</sup>

We do not attempt to furnish the names of all Waterford's Civil War soldiers or their fighting units. Even as early as 1878, Historian Sylvester<sup>8</sup> complained that the state-directed list of these men was only partly recorded. We use his account for some of our men, however incomplete.

Benjamin O'Connor served five years in the 3rd Infantry of the Regular Army while Thomas Glavin fought in the 8th Infantry of the Regulars. The other Waterford men fought in the 13th Artillery, the 22nd, 44th, 77th, 93rd, 115th, 125th, 169th and the 192nd Regiments. Hamilton N. Hewitt, mentioned later, fought in the 125th Volunteers which mustered in at Troy. Its commander, Colonel George Lamb Willard, was killed at Gettysburg.

Some of the Waterford men who were killed were John Murray, J. G. Porter and John Wright, all at South Mountain. Others killed in action were Joseph Black and Patrick Conway. Lieutenant Hiram Clute, the Ensign of our first Company "A," was wounded at Manassas and lay upon the battlefield five days before being operated on; he died as a result of the delay. Lewis B. Wells was killed at Vienna Station in Virginia. J. B. Vandekar and John H. Vanderwerker both died in the hospital and Charles W. Shepard died in the infamous Salisbury Prison.

Ralph A. Savage, Waterford's gifted scenic artist, was wounded at the battle of Bull Run and was discharged from army service. Joseph Harriman lost an arm at Bull Run and Matthew H. Martratt had his right arm removed at South Mountain. John Singleton astonished all by being shot through the left lung but still lived. Lieu-

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<sup>7</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, May 11, 1861.

<sup>8</sup> Nathaniel B. Sylvester, *History of Saratoga County*, 1609-1878, p. 335.

tenant John Tenbroeck was supposedly killed by concussion and as he was being buried in a pit, revived at the last moment and escaped the horrible fate of being buried alive.<sup>9</sup>

Since several of our soldiers of the 22nd Regiment died or were wounded at the Battle of South Mountain, September 14, 1862, a short account of that battle is given. The latter near Harper's Ferry, took place after Manassas, when Lee's whole army invaded Maryland. Lee's Stonewall Jackson, with Gen. McLaws, had forced the surrender of 11,000 Union men at Harper's Ferry which place should have been evacuated long before, since it could be easily bombarded from the nearby heights. Union Gen. McClellan using 35,000 men had the good luck to find Gen. Lee's battle plan before South Mountain. Had he hurried he could have defeated Lee's divided army since the latter's aide and right arm, Stonewall Jackson had just hurried away to Sharpsburg. But McClellan was always cautious and a bit slow and he arrived a day late to fight up the 1,000 foot South mountain which Lee had re-inforced finding that McClellan was wise to the lost battle plans.

The uphill fighting of September 14, 1862 was stubborn and bloody. The Union lost 1500 men and Lee about 4000. The battle, however, finally permitted Lee to get his divided army together for drawn battle of Antietam which was the bloodiest day of the war.

Historian Bruce Catton reveals just why General McClellan, in spite of being the idol of his army, and almost adored in Washington, was shorn of his command. The Union army then practically had no intelligence section although some of the finest spy work had been done by the women from both the North and South. As a result McClellan brought into army work civilian Allan Pinkerton. Pinkerton operated under the assumed name of "Major J. E. Allen," and out of his army exploits developed the "Federal Secret Service." But either Pinkerton developed the habit of constantly upping the enemy numbers facing McClellan or the latter magnified them himself. As a result McClellan missed numerous opportunities to crush the Southern forces because of their imagined magnitude. Eventually this practice robbed him of the Command of the Union forces.

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9 Nathaniel B. Sylvester, *History of Saratoga County, 1609-1878*, p. 336.

In our boyhood days in Waterford one was always impressed with the neat and soldierly appearance of Colonel S. P. Smith. Dressed smartly in black, but with an empty sleeve, he was to our eyes an impressive figure as he frequented a small but nice smelling greenhouse. He was a thinker and inventor and experimented with the effect of different colored lights upon growing plants. He invented several items and his construction of the country's first poured concrete house at 64 First, Waterford, about 1876 still stands, a matter of interest to modern engineers.

Colonel Smith had a distinguished record starting with, it is said, the "Iron Hearted Regiment" (the 115th Regiment of Volunteers) for which at the beginning of the war he had assembled a company of 100 men. He was chosen its non-commissioned Captain but at the war's end came out a full-commissioned Colonel. Once captured, he was put in Andersonville prison,<sup>10</sup> but being released in a prisoner exchange went into the army's secret or intelligence section. In this work he was landed in Florida and was hotly pursued through terrible swamps, finally escaping to the coast. Picked up by a vessel he re-entered the service and was promoted. He lost an arm at Vicksburg and came back to Waterford almost a skeleton, having suffered from gangrene.

His Civil War sword was given to Waterford's Post Sheridan, G.A.R. and after that organization was disbanded was supposedly turned over to the Waterford Charles Brady Post, American Legion, No. 235.

In my earliest boating days I used to be oarsman on Hudson river fishing trips for Civil War veteran Hamilton N. Hewitt, father of Mrs. Charles L. Mead of Waterford. Veteran Hewitt was a kind and gentle man but showed in every way the terrible experience of two years he had spent in Andersonville prison.

Both Libby and Andersonville prisons were built "To destroy more Yankees than can be destroyed at the front."<sup>11</sup> At Andersonville, prisoners were walking skeletons covered with filth and vermin

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<sup>10</sup> From an account by Rev. Harry Fred Smith, Grandson, Mineville, N. Y., December 19, 1955.

<sup>11</sup> *Campfire and Battlefield*, Rossiter Johnson (Photos copyrighted in 1894, pp. 321 and 390).



and many were kept out of doors near especially filthy spots, where breathing was a burden. Each man had a four foot space in the stockade where at one time, 13,000 men out of 49,000 died.

Men were shot dead on the slightest provocation, for the sentries were given a month's furlough for shooting a prisoner for a violation of rules. As General Sherman approached Andersonville, on his "way to the sea," the same Confederate General Winder quoted above, issued orders to "open fire on the stockade with grape shot." These were the orders of a man filled with hate and vengeance.

Small wonder then that a Union prisoner with only death seemingly before him could write the following poem to his loved ones far away in Waterford. It was the sad and touching plea of Private Hamilton N. Hewitt.

#### THE PRISONER'S CRY

When our Country called for men,  
We came from Forge and Store and Mill,  
From Workshop, Farm and Factory,  
The broken ranks to fill.

We left our quiet and happy homes,  
And ones we loved so well,  
To vanquish all our Union foes  
Or fall where others fell.

Now in prison drear' we languish,  
And it is our constant cry,  
O you who yet can Save us,  
Will you leave us here to die?  
The Voice of Slander tells you,

Our hearts were weak with fear,  
That all, or nearly all of us,  
Were captured in the rear,  
The scars upon our bodies,  
The missing legs and shattered arm,  
A truer tale will tell.

We have tried to do our Duty,  
In the sight of God on high,  
O you who yet can save us,  
Will you go and leave us here to die.

There are hearts with hope still high  
In our quiet Northern home,  
Waiting, watching for the feet,  
That will never, never come,  
In Southern Prison waiting,  
Tattered, pale and gaunt,  
Growing weaker, weaker daily,  
Poor and hopeless captives lie  
O you who can save us,  
Will you leave us here to die?

Without our Prison gate,  
A graveyard's near at hand,  
Where lies ten thousand Union men,  
Beneath the Georgian sand.  
Scores and scores are laid beside them,  
As day succeeds each day  
And thus it will ever be  
Until all shall fade away,  
And the last can say when dying,  
With upturned and glazing eye,  
O ye who yet can save us,  
Will you leave us here to Die?

by Waterford G. A. R. Veteran,

Private Hamilton N. Hewitt, 125th New York Volunteers  
Andersonville, Ga., Prison, 1863-1865

But the dreadful war between the States finally drew to a close and these men from the Grand Army of the Republic who had fought one of the most terrible wars of history joined for various reunions. One news item taken from a Waterford clipping, but undated, tells of the 115th or "Iron Hearted Regiment" of the New York State volunteers parading through our place with 450 veterans in line. The loyalty of the soldiers to one another and their memories of the past, brought together men from Chicago and other western cities. But only thirty survivors from our own Waterford marched. They met at the Post Sheridan Hall being joined later in the parade by Doring's Band, the Knickerbockers, the Northside (Peck) Hose Company and ex-soldiers from both Post Bolton Troy and Post Lyon, G.A.R. of Cohoes.

Again on August 8, 1889 a giant parade of 600 of these veterans

from the 22nd Regiment of New York State also met in Waterford. At this time our townsmen were described as the "People of this Ancient Ford," by Village President Powell. All stores and places of business were closed at 10 o'clock in the morning to do honor to these men. After a meeting at the rooms of our Post Sheridan and a fine parade, they enjoyed a banquet in the Town Hall.

It is well that our "Men in Blue" enjoyed these parades and reunions. Today, demonstrating the inevitability of death, all the Union men are gone, and there are but three men of the Grey army alive, and these are over a century old.<sup>12</sup>

#### LOCAL RESIDENT SAW LINCOLN ASSASSINATED

As the Civil War drew to a close President Lincoln had grown steadily in the affections of our people. His kindness and sympathy had been unflinching while his statesmanship was of the highest character. His Gettysburg address too, was to become a national classic.

The whole country was therefore shocked to hear of his assassination at Ford's theatre on April 14, 1865. John Wilkes Booth, an actor who with others had prepared a plot to kill several heads of the government, shot the President at close range from a stage box.

In the theatre at that moment was Civil War veteran Captain Silas Owen, father of Mrs. Edgar Zeh of Waterford. Captain Owen, an eye witness to the tragedy, gave the details of the assassination to the press following a strange story printed in the St. Louis Star, that D. E. George of Oklahoma, a suicide, had years later declared that he, not Booth, was Lincoln's murderer. With regard to Lincoln's assassination and the killing of Booth Captain Owen said,<sup>13</sup> "I know that Booth did not commit suicide, but was killed in Virginia by Boston Corbett, over thirty years ago. How do I know it? Because I saw him lying dead on the ironclad Montauk, when he was brought back from Tobacco Creek on a dispatch boat." Captain Owen said that he had met and saw Booth twice before the Ford Theatre shooting. Captain Owen's account continued, "The house was unusually quiet and the President was smiling down upon the audience,

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<sup>12</sup> *Troy Times Record*, November 3, 1956.

<sup>13</sup> Written account, by Captain Silas Owen loaned by Mrs. (Dr.) Edgar Zeh, Feb. 12, 1956.



and I shall not forget the look of mingled weariness and pleasure that rested upon that rugged, honest face. I scarcely had time to notice this when the report of a pistol rang out and a man leaped from the President's box, swinging his arms wildly and muttering something as he leaped to the stage. Mrs. Lincoln began to scream at the top of her voice as Actress Laura Keane shouted, "It's John Wilkes Booth! Kill him! Kill him!"

Captain Silas Owen in the last year of the war was commanding officer of the U. S. Ship *Primrose* and acting master in the United States Navy, receiving a record of unblemished character from H. H. Bell, Commander in the U. S. Navy. For over a year he was at the blockade of Charleston Harbor and met at Port Royal the ship *Memphis* containing the men of the 10th Albany Regiment. Here were familiar faces from his home city of Cohoes. Among these also were two names familiar to Waterfordians, they being Jehial Himes and John McGaffin.<sup>14</sup>

#### WATERFORD CIVIL WAR NOTES

Waterford like many other northern villages was on the "Underground Railroad." This was a secret and mysterious means of transporting Negroes and alleged runaway slaves from slave states to Canada. Waterford's first anti-slavery movement was noted in our paper of 1833,<sup>15</sup> but the Canadians in their anti-slavery movement were from 30 to 40 years earlier. As early as 1792 the slaves accompanying our fleeing Revolutionary "loyalists" were deported by Canada to Sierra Leone in West Africa as colonists, and in 1803 slavery was also made illegal in lower Canada. Our Northern "Fugitive Slave Law" permitting man-hunting of Negroes was a disgrace to the United States and was wiped away by Lincoln's Proclamation of Emancipation on September 22, 1862.

In the meanwhile the nocturnal and northward exodus of these unfortunate people went quietly on, as printed by our local paper,<sup>16</sup> "A colored man with a through ticket paid a quiet visit to our village and remained in town overnight. He was entertained by one or two stockholders of the road and hurried north on Monday morning."

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<sup>14</sup> Probably the Uncle of Colonel, John McGaffin of World War I.

<sup>15</sup> *Waterford Atlas*, Aug. 28, 1833.

<sup>16</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, May 26, 1860.

## THE BALLOON MAN

John La Mountain who lived in Lansingburg in 1860 was a balloonist who selected the corner of Broad and Third streets in Waterford on July 19, 1860 for a balloon ascension. That was a gala day in Waterford. Citizens subscribed money to cover the aeronauts expenses, for John La Mountain thought that the balloon would be useful and it was, months later, in the Union Army.

His "monster" gas bag called the *Atlantic*, was usually filled with illuminating gas made by the Lansingburg Gas Works, but on this occasion John elected to try out a new gas making machine. This time it failed, and with the ascension published for 4 p.m., La Mountain and his ballon were hustled to Troy for gas. In the meanwhile the streets and rooftops near the place of ascension were crowded by Waterfordians and visitors from the neighboring villages, being entertained by Drew's Cornet Band from Mechanicville.<sup>17</sup>

John returned before 6 o'clock and took off, disappearing over the summit of Mount Rafinesque at a height of 5000 feet. He landed at Pownal, Vermont after a successful air voyage.

This was but one of La Mountain's aerial exploits. Again on August 14, 1860 he took off from Schenectady, and landed just beyond Bennington, Vermont. As he passed over the Cohoes Falls, he stated that the noise of the falling water was more awesome and impressive than the otherwise beautiful sights that he saw hereabouts.

On June 29, 1861 our local balloonist, now called Professor La Mountain, and his balloon joined the Union Army, going to Fortress Monroe under General Ben Butler to obtain visual knowledge of the "rebel" camps which as was said, "Could not be learned in any other way." After the Waterford failure of his gas filling machine on July 19, 1860, La Mountain contracted with the Gage Machine works at Waterford for the manufacture of a retort to make gas, since he had from the first envisioned his balloon might be used in the coming war and he knew that city made gas would not be available near the battlefields. The Gages, always excellent mechanics, made a device holding 22 bushels of coke. When the

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<sup>17</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, July 21, 1860.

coke had been heated to a red-hot stage, steam jets were turned on the hot coke. This with two fillings, resulted in the production of 15,000 cubic feet of pure, light gas. Both General Wool and Captain Willard, the last later killed at Gettysburg, came to Waterford to inspect the device.<sup>18</sup> In the meanwhile John La Mountain had been commissioned as an Aeronaut for the Army by General Butler.

### THE GAGE COMPANY, ORDNANCE MANUFACTURERS

The Union army was seemingly impressed with Gage's war efforts for a little later Gage, Campbell and Gage were commissioned and did make for one Joel Tiffany of Albany, a machine-gun, a weapon quite unusual for those days. It had five revolving barrels which spewed out one and one-half ounce ball or slugs at the rate of 100-300 shots per minute.

This whole area had been shocked by the rather uncalled-for death of Captain Ellsworth and this gave an opportunity for the disposition of this new weapon. The multiple barreled gun called the "Tiffany Union Rifle Battery," was given to the newly organized Ellsworth or "Vengeance" Regiment which left Albany on October 16, 1861.<sup>19</sup> We do not know of any records which describe the gun's war potentials.

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<sup>18</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, July 6, 1861.

<sup>19</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, September 14, 1861.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

### HORSE CARS, THE TROLLEYS, AND OUR FIRST ELECTRICITY

ABOUT THE TIME of the Civil War, the old "Plank" Road between Lansingburg and Troy with its primitive stage coaches, toll gates and tolls, became doomed by progress.

This route extended down Second Avenue and doubtless it was on this highway that Waterford's renowned Mr. Fisk and his "hearse" made history up to the years of 1850.

Next appeared the horse cars. On August 30, 1861 the Troy and Lansingburg Horse Railway drove its first horse-car up through Lansingburg to the edge of the Waterford Union Bridge. The vehicles were low and broad and had a roomy platform at both ends as standing space for the drivers.

For fare the passenger dropped 5 cents into a box as he entered if riding between the Troy city limits. If going to or from Lansingburg to Troy, he put in 7 cents.

A year later, in 1862, this "Red" line was extended over the Union Bridge to Waterford. The color schemes for the cars was adopted to distinguish different routes. The Green Line ran between Waterford and Cohoes, this route coming into use in 1884, stages serving heretofor. In July of 1870 the car barns burned and of the 142 horses, only seventy were rescued. In October of 1872 all the horse-cars stopped running due to distemper among the horses, the streets also being almost deserted of horses.<sup>1</sup> In 1868 it took a full hour to reach Waterford by the horse cars from Troy.<sup>2</sup>

The trolleys, operating under the Sprague single overhead trolley systems came into use September 4, 1889<sup>3</sup> but the electric Waterford-Cohoes line did not start until November 29, 1889.<sup>4</sup> In the

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1, 2, 3, *Diary*, Laura Cramer Ormsby, ancestor of Waterford's Charles Cramer Ormsby.

4 *Troy Budget*, 1889.

change over from horse to the trolley system the same rails were used.

In April of 1889 Lansingburg enjoyed its first electric lights and we assume Waterford followed closely after with the two carbon electrode system, probably served by the "Beacon" Electric Company of Lansingburg.

In the year 1900 all the local trolley lines, the Red, Blue, White Green, were joined by the Albany lines to form the United Traction Company which later had a number of prolonged and disturbing labor strikes.

Sometime prior to 1902 the interurban Hudson Valley Electric Railway was organized. It had rail lines of over one hundred miles in length with waterpower resources of 8100 horsepower and steam-power of 1300 horsepower. Apparently this was not properly organized for after a serious traction strike of its employees, the Captain of a militia company reported<sup>5</sup> that during the strike much of the trouble was caused by the miserable service of the company as regarded power, car and (striking) motormen service.

The cars were of the heavy electric type and ran from Troy to Warrensburg with branch lines to both Saratoga and Saratoga Lake and Greenwich.

A railway strike of its employees occurred in September 1902 and upon request of the sheriffs of Warren, Saratoga and Washington counties to curb violence, the entire Second Regiment of the New York National Guard was called into service. Waterford, Mechanicville and Stillwater were patrolled by soldiers of the Third Battalion who were encamped near Stillwater. The militia had a difficult job to insure order and at the same time protect the valuable and widely scattered power stations. Switches were jammed and heavy stones hidden in fires on the tracks over which the trolleys had to pass.

Elsewhere is told of the stone-throwing in Waterford, the train wreck and how the troops who first approached with fixed bayonets later fired their rifles in the air. Waterford, generally a place of law and order, was more or less cleared in 1902, by the statement of a

<sup>5</sup> Report for 1902 of Adjutant General State of New York, Vol. 1 (Append. "CC" p. 148).

militia captain who officially reported seeing several men in traction uniforms fleeing from a jammed switch. After duty from September 17 to November 4, 1902, the militia was relieved from service, and peace again returned to the Hudson Valley lines.

In the year 1906 the Delaware and Hudson Company bought out the entire United Traction Company together with the Hudson Valley trolley organization, which once ran from Troy to Warrensburg. In 1929 the Delaware and Hudson Corporation sold its rights in this combine.

The Fifth Avenue Bus Company running from Upper Troy to Troy proper was organized on May 16, 1915.

In 1924 the United Traction Company put into use a system of "Trackless" trolleys which after a relatively brief period of use were followed by the type of busses resembling those in use in 1955.

In 1955, the busses of this area were running on a restricted bus schedule and at higher fares, said to be caused by a lack of passengers, who now presumably ride in private automobiles. The latter are still making inroads upon the services once rendered by the United Traction Company. The Albia service center has been abandoned and in the summer of 1955 the North Troy service center was given up. The central organization of the United Traction Company is now located at Albany, New York, the local busses starting from that point.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

### WATERFORD NEWSPAPERS

THE ALBANY GAZETTE was one of the earliest newspapers once circulated in Halfmoon or Waterford. It was published in 1771 and had a sub-office in Halfmoon.

The *Waterford Gazette* was our first local paper and the second published in Saratoga County. It began in 1801 and continued until 1812. It was published by Horace Wadsworth.

The *Waterford Reporter* was published in 1822 but had a short life.

The *Anti-Masonic Recorder* was started in 1830 but died shortly thereafter.

The *Waterford Union*, was published each Wednesday by W. Holland and was issued until 1837.

The *Waterford Atlas* began in December 24, 1834 first under John Haxton and then under Zenophon Haywood, lasting until March 9, 1836.

The *Manufacturers, Mechanics, and Farm Journal* was started in 1834 and succeeded the *Atlas*. One wag declared that it died because it could not bear its long name.

The *Democratic Champion* was published in 1840 by H. Wilbur.

The *Waterford Sentinel* began in 1850 and was sold to James Masten in 1858. In 1870 it was sold to Zenophon Haywood and Richard H. Palmateer. In 1873 R. H. Palmateer purchased the *Sentinel*.

The *Waterford Advertiser* was started in 1872. It was published by R. H. Palmateer and Joel Smith until 1909. Joel Smith continued it until 1918 when it was purchased by John G. Burgess. In 1920 J. Edward Burgess entered the partnership and father and son continued the publication until the end of 1929.

The *Waterford Times* was started in 1910 by Richard H. Palmateer and continued until about 1920.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Waterford Newspaper data partly contributed by J. Edward Burgess of the Burgess Printing Company of Waterford.

Our neighbor Crescent also had the *Crescent Eagle* first printed on July 5, 1854.

No further claim to Waterford's intellectual stature is needed after a glance at its newswriting achievements. But, after a century and a quarter of good service, our papers gave way to the larger newspaper organization of a nearby city.

The newspapers of a century and a half ago belied the name for they were not newsy. But with the aid of the *Farmer's Almanac* as reading matter, they doubtless were welcomed by the people of that day.

These 1800 papers almost ignored all news of a local character which item probably was passed on to the populace through the medium of the country store in those non-hurry-days.

The front of the news sheet was devoted largely to advertising, which then as now, was the paper's payoff feature. The inner sheets were filled with the Acts of Congress, the Federal news, lengthy essays and stories. Much space was given to the publication of the most agonizing poetry concerning those who had just passed beyond. Indeed few and fortunate were the local characters who could quietly slip into the grave without a swan song being written in their honor in what was meant to be very touching language. The non-poets who wrote the stuff seemed to have a staff assignment for their contributions appeared week after week signed with a familiar nom-de-plume.

But in spite of news oddities these old papers have considerable informative value today. They tell the history of the past with frank and jarring boldness that fully supports the predictions of the *Sentinel* editor who wrote in 1860 these prophetic words—"Save and bind your newspapers. At the end of twenty years you will have a municipal history of more priceless value to you than all the histories of Tatitus, Livy, Herodotus, Zenophon, Tully and Josephus combined." That editor was right; his chickens have now come to roost.

From a further study of these old sheets this writer believes that the word "libel" was then not in the dictionary and its potency not discovered. It was a direct and straightforward age that those men enjoyed. They largely said what they thought and if their opponent

felt aggrieved they always could rely upon the dueling pistol. The latter weapons, by the way, were unrefined and tricky and more misses than hits were generally scored.

Another early and libelous sheet if published now exactly as printed in the 1800's, would render the newspaper responsible for libel suits probably totaling more than the national debt.

With our ordinary knowledge of local history we have little difficulty in deciphering just who was meant when one of our local editors headed a column—

"BACHELORS OF WATERFORD"  
*(A Rich Descriptive List)*

"R. D. D-s, is a confirmed bachelor on the other side of fifty. Has been a member of Congress and a prominent New York politician. Rejects free love newspapers but is generous to a fault especially to ladies similarly blessed with singleness. Worth \$500,000.00 and lives in a high old mansion. A most desirable prize to her who can win him."

"C-s V-r Marketman and poormaster. He decided tendencies towards the ladies, but has yet developed no matrimonial proclivities. Needs persuasion and encouragement. Owns a fine residence and enjoys a profitable business."

These are but two from a total of twenty-two descriptions which must have produced a warm, uneasy glow within the unmarried men of our town on thus being publicly dragged to the edge of the matrimonial mart.

After two generations had passed we note an increase in the number of local news items, but these were still far outranked by long and pointless editorials.

One of our papers, probably for business reasons, had two editors and one of them was a retired clergyman. One of these men was not known to the public since the editorials were not signed. One of the two would badly "rib" the editor of either a Troy or Cohoes paper and bring him into a very wrathful stage. The latter editors wanting to counter attack a definite individual had to do so by means of generalities. Thus in the year 1861 a mild civil war was in progress. This was joyfully given growth by a careless writer for the



*Troy Times* who on August 16, 1861 wrote an account of how a canal boat was swept "over the Cohoes Falls." The Waterford scribes gleefully welcomed this by printing in the *Waterford Sentinel* this comment—

### A TERRIBLE WRECK

"The *Troy Times* of yesterday afternoon told of a dreadful wreck of a canal boat over the Cohoes Falls. The scene was portrayed as a terrible one; it must have taken an awful storm to drive that staunch boat up the Mohawk and then to blow her downward again over the cataract."

For those not familiar with local geography it should be added that canal boats could not sail nearer (upstream) than a three-quarters of a mile of the 70 foot falls because of shoal water. But, not far away, a hazard for canal boats, was the dangerous Cohoes *Dam*. This was what the careless newswriter had in mind, when he substituted the word "Falls," for the dam.

But, turnabout is fair play and we now must harpoon our own Waterford editor. Before doing so we should add that, like all village editors, he was constantly pleading for our people to pay him for their subscriptions to help shoo the wolf from his door. His indiscretion was therefore forgivable.

The said scribe was most generous in bestowing praise upon all and various merchants whose store fronts were neat and appealing.

Came Thanksgiving and the hosts of fat turkeys visible in the windows made a wonderful epicurian appeal within the soul and body of the printer. After a few days he went to his publishing house and wrote partly as follows—

"While other editors were clamorous for a *Thanksgiving Turkey*, and some of them in a style that made us blush for the cheek of the profession, we kept quiet, humbly trusting that our modesty would bring its true reward. Sure enough, our confidence was rightly directed, for on Wednesday morning long before we had looked for any specimen of poultry to our quarters, came our good friend A. C. Waldron of the Union Market who entered our office and deposited a mammoth gobbler and withdrew quietly without waiting for a reception speech." We counted the actual words the editor

used in saying "thank you" for that turkey and they totaled two hundred forty-three.

But this same man passed on good qualities to his son who in 1876 wrote an excellent "History of Cohoes," in response to the request of President Grant, in commemorating the hundredth anniversary of our country.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

### THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

ON FEBRUARY 15, 1898 the United States Battleship *Maine* was blown up at 9:40 in the evening in Havana harbor killing 266 American sailors. This touched off an anti-Spanish war wave in America since early reports showed that the explosion, supposedly caused by Spaniards, occurred on the outside of the vessel. On February 25, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, sent secret orders to Commodore Dewey to go to the Philippine Islands and attack the Spanish fleet in case war broke out. At the same time Roosevelt instituted target practice in the Navy. Roosevelt later resigned to become leader of the "Rough Riders."

On March 9 the mobilization of the Army began, The United States demanding on April 21 that Spain leave Cuba. Spain refused and then broke relations, and the United States declared war on April 25, 1898.

On May 1 Commodore George Dewey with six warships and one revenue cutter destroyed the Spanish fleet, consisting of 10 ships, in Manila Bay.

On May 2 Waterford's first volunteers responded to our country's call. These were T. Frederick Bootman and Edward Cole of the 21st Separate Company, Harry E. Sherwin, 6th Company, together with Albert Lambert, Eugene Herring, H. Herring, Harry Perrin, and First Lieutenant John McGaffin, all of the 7th Separate Company of Cohoes.<sup>1</sup> This was part of Lieut. McGaffin's long military career in which he finally rose to the rank of Colonel.

The war-cry of our Spanish War men was "Remember the Maine." One of the sensations of the war was the hasty 16,000 mile trip of the Battleship *Oregon* around Cape Horn in time to join Admiral Sampson's ships which destroyed Cerveras escaping Spanish fleet near Santiago on July 3, 1898.

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<sup>1</sup> *Troy Times*, May 2, 1898.



From June 3 to July 17 various Cuban land battles occurred in which Colonel Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" under Colonel Leonard Wood made some of the history. On July 1 while Gen. Chaffee was attacking El Caney, Generals Joe Wheeler and J. F. Kent were carrying San Juan Hill. Santiago surrendered on July 17 while General Nelson A. Miles took Puerto Rico on July 25-28.

The peace treaty was signed in Paris on December 10, 1898.<sup>2</sup> The Spanish War was important in American history since from it grew the United States as a naval power, besides eliminating Spain from lands that had been discovered by Columbus. The United States thus acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, paying Spain \$20,000,000.00 for all its claims in the latter. The United States guaranteed and gave Cuba its independence and granted independence also to the Philippines on July 4, 1946.

Admiral George Dewey was given a great celebration for his Manila victory when he returned home on September 29, 1899.

During nearly six months of the Spanish War our Captain John McGaffin served as Commander of Company "B" of Cohoes. As a Colonel he also trained soldiers for War I.

Of those Spanish War men who left Cohoes on May 2, 1898 in a pouring rain, less than ten men were alive in 1952.<sup>3</sup>

### DOCTORS IN WATERFORD

The doctors, after the ministers, were the most important personages in the community. In early days young men became physician's apprentices, and after serving for four or five years, then moved to a doctorless place.

Drugs were few and the doctors gave calomel and quinine and bled all patients freely. The doctor's saddle-bag was the community drug store.

Gangrene was expected after operations and patients with broken bones frequently died from shock. None of the early practitioners hesitated to pull a tooth and an offending ingrowing nail was merely disposed of by tying a length of lint about the nearest toe-joint and

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<sup>2</sup> *Chronology of American History* (Krull) and the *World Almanac* (New York World Telegram and Sun) 1955.

<sup>3</sup> *Troy Record*, May 1, 1952.

then slicing off a piece of both the toe and nail where it hurt. Modern anaesthesia did not arrive until later and smallpox ravaged the land. The settlers' wives purged the family with senna and rhubarb and one's blood was "purified" come spring, with sulphur, molasses and gritty magnesia scraped from a hard brick. Other unfortunates in the spring ate green rhue between slices of bread or drank rhue tea. This is the most bitter and the vilest herb on earth. Our country's forbears used bad judgment in many cases and then hoped the physician would perform miracles.

The babies would be baptised the first Sunday after birth, frequently in an unheated "meeting" place or church and less than half of these poor children survived. To discover if the golden gates were ajar and yawning for us, it was once a common practice to try and stop free flowing blood by covering the wound with a nice dusty cobweb taken from the darkest confines of a hay barn.

These archaic customs were common and once in boyhood days we heard a doctor swearing freely about a countryman who had freely applied horse manure to a bad axe cut and then died of blood poisoning. The physician was called as a last resort.

Our physicians had and still have a most important place in our lives. They help bring us into the world and they do their best to keep us here. We patients are not famous for cooperation.

After Waterford grew up a bit we slowly began to take care of things that were hampering health. Our dead animals were no longer tossed into the Mohawk or anchored either above or beneath its surface. We graduated from the farmer's long handled milk dipper and the old milk pail. We rid ourselves of street water pumps and the things that contaminated them. Instead of inviting the flies into the home for the fun of capturing them later with sticky messes, we now use complete fly screening. The old ice "box" which had such an insatiable thirst for ice (and gave so little back) is gone forever and with it many other things which hurt our health.

Even though Dr. Timothy Upham, acting as health officer in 1832, had embargoed all canal boats against the Canadian invasion of cholera that disease struck the village in August of 1855. Two families of St. Francis Indians had pitched their tents on the "Bat-

tery" and were stricken with the cholera. Six of the Indians and one villager died.

We still think it remarkable that with all the health hazards of 1833, the mortality rate in Waterford as reported by Dr. Elijah Porter was less than two per cent annually. In 1953 the approximate death rate was 1.13 per cent.

From many scattered sources we have obtained what may be but a partial list of those physicians who have practiced here since the Revolution. Doubtless some names have been missed.

By mere chance we have and quote, the life record of Dr. Chauncey Boughton who served the Waterford area about 1830.

*Waterford's Doctors:* Surgeon Benjamin Shaw; Dr. German, 1775; Dr. John Stearns, 1793; Dr. Turk (Ret. Naval Surgeon), 1800; Dr. Wright; Dr. Elijah Porter, Surg. 144th Reg.; Dr. Timothy Upham, 1824; Dr. P. J. Heartt; Dr. Whittmore; Dr. Dickenson; Dr. J. Spencer Dr. Goodrich; Dr. W. Shaw; Dr. S. W. Simpson; Dr. Chauncey Boughton; Dr. J. M. Austin; Dr. Barkman; Dr. Goodrich, 1867; Dr. James; Dr. P. Hogan, 1861; Dr. Sabin; Dr. Kenney; Dr. Dunbar; Dr. George H. Cole; Dr. Sherer; Dr. Dunlop; Dr. Roland Stubbs; Dr. Francis J. Scott; Dr. Edgar Zeh; Dr. A. G. Peckham; Dr. Harold Peckham; Dr. Marshall Quandt.

#### DR. CHAUNCEY BOUGHTON

Doctor Boughton was born at Nassau on January 21, 1805. At seventeen years of age he was a student at Fairfield Medical School and began the practice of medicine at twenty-one years of age. He interrupted his career for one year at the University of New York and being a self-made man also taught school for a period. Dr. Boughton lived in that age when a physician had no days off and when such men were actual slaves of their profession.

He lived at Halfmoon, New York, and at his retirement had an enormous rural practice. He had control of all medical business from the outskirts of Waterford to Mechanicville and from Rexford Flats to the outskirts of West Troy and Cohoes back to Waterford. Several of his cases have gone into the files of medical work. While living at Halfmoon village he helped build the Baptist Church at that place and also was Superintendent of the Waterford Baptist Sunday School



for thirty years. After retiring from his medical practice he bought the large brick building at the northeast corner of Second and Middle Streets in Waterford where he celebrated his 90th birthday among a host of friends and neighbors.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Troy Times*, Jan. 21, 1895.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

### THE CEMETERY POND BRIDGE AND THE WISE ELEPHANT

NOTHING irritated travelers and certain people of our locality more than did the bridge that went across part of the old Cemetery pond. The latter was a thirty-foot widening out of an old creek. It drained the valley west of the village and south of 1955 Washington Avenue. The Erie Barge Canal now occupies this old valley and the old Cemetery bridge is now gone.

Since 1823 when the Champlain Canal entered the village southwesterly, by way of the "Northside," our officials had contended that the upkeep of the bridge was the responsibility of New York State, since the canal had disturbed the creek's original and normal flow into the Mohawk river. The State seemingly did not agree for it did nothing about the bridge. As teams passed over it, its boards would "up end" and horses feet would go through the planking. Passers-by had to be always alert, and for years the weekly newspaper was commenting about the State's neglect and the dangerous condition of the bridge.

On October 6, 1860 our paper<sup>1</sup> printed an account of Van Amburg's circus parade either entering or leaving our village. It was destined to cross the bridge. The parade approached the pond crossing, with its greatest attraction a 120-year-old elephant. He being wise with the experience that comes from a long life, lowered his trunk and after a sniff at that faulty bridge stopped dead in his tracks. None of the keeper's threats, blows or proddings with a sharp stick would cause the stalled animal to cross over.

Finally on his own, the sagacious old elephant, wiser than all his keepers, went down into the Cemetery pond into which the creek emptied, and proceeded to swim around to the other side of the weak structure, joining the parade on the other side of the bridge.

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<sup>1</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, Oct. 6, 1860.

This proves that the Republican party was not so dumb when it adopted this animal as a symbol.

A year or more after this animal incident our local politicians managed to have a Waterford man assigned to an Albany position. He promptly had the bridge repaired and taken over by the State.

The Cemetery Pond itself was a local institution. At its broadest part where it joined the Cohoes branch of Champlain canal, it was the soaking place for all William Burton and Sons imported mahogany "zebra" and other choice logs. Here this expensive wood was kept wet and pliable until dropped below to Burton's nearby veneer-making machinery. We have no doubt that the attraction of this pond as a wet storage for choice imported lumber caused the William Burton and Sons company to leave Cohoes and adopt this useful and natural site as part of their fine Waterford veneer works.

In after years the water was drawn from the pond while State employees made minor repairs to the Canal. When this happened on a Sunday the spot became an outdoor theater. A host of young boys and teen-agers would descend into the sticky and muddy depths of the pond, armed with "ash sifters" or spears in search of wiggling bullheads and other fish, which still lurked in the remaining water. A full grown man dressed in his Sunday clothes and garbed in long rubber boots once joined the juveniles in this intriguing "grab bag" sport. He made the mistake of not moving about enough and soon both his legs had become deeply fixed in the sticky mire. In trying to get his feet free he lost his balance and fell downward, full length in the muddy soup. How we and the Sunday crowd enjoyed and applauded that fine show!

Near the cemetery side of that creek and pond was a beautiful grassy valley where youngsters with pin-hook fishlines used to angle for fish. Most of us, I think, miss such rural scenes with their natural entertainment.

#### THE SCHAGHTICOKE VALE OF PEACE AND THE KNICKERBACKER MANSION

These are two local but unappreciated historical treasures, seemingly esteemed by neither the poor or the wealthy. They lie hidden a few miles east of Mechanicville, snuggling beneath a high ridge



of trees beside the curving Hoosick, in the Mahican Indians beautiful "Vale of Peace."

Here in 1676 in the place called "Old Schaghticoke" near Route 67, was held a great Indian and white man festival, marking the union of the victorious Mahicans with the Hoosicks. Here, too, the Mahicans chose their new national name the "Schaghticokes" signifying the "Mingling of the Waters," for the ancient Hoosick and Hudson rivers unite nearby.

This Vale of Peace was the peaceful home of the local Mahicans until their forty-three-year war with the Mohawks which first arose over the Dutch goods coming from Albany. After the Mahican victory and union with the Hoosicks, the enemy Mohawks met them here for the 1676 peace parley called by Governor Andros.

The meeting time was especially selected for the Indians. It was their own Indian festival of the new moon of February, this time a harbinger of both spring and of peace. The governor called the Indian meeting "The Witenagemot" meaning an "Assembly of the Wise." He sought to bring peace between these two warrior races and to give the occasion a meaning they also planted two oak saplings, one for the Mahicans and another for the Mohawks.

In preparation for the festival Indian runners were sent out, and at the appointed time 1,000 Indians with their former enemies assembled here.

It was a colorful affair, the brilliant red uniforms of the British contrasting sharply with the gay feathers and garb of the forest people.

The assembly sat in four circles, the late enemies sitting together in the inner circle. The young warriors were placed in the next circle with Governor Andros and his staff in the third. The Indian squaws with their children sat in the outer ring. The squaws acted as the recording secretaries, later recording on the young minds of their children the impact of this important event. This episode points out the significant manner in which the unwritten history of this primitive people was carried forward. An incident occurring in 1955 and attached to the tape recording of ancient Indian songs, brought out the fact that comparison of these songs, one made in 1955 and an-

other given some three generations before by Indians now dead, showed that little if any material difference existed between these two renditions. This supports the value of the Indian method of teaching.

As part of the 1676 ceremony, two Jesuit Fathers, supposedly Bruyas and Boniface of the Mohawk Missions, together with two Dutch "Dominie" Schaats and Van Rensselaer of Albany, offered prayers and sang anthems.

Next, the Mahicans and the Hoosicks joined together and assumed their new name which remains today commemorated by the existence of Schaghticoke.

The planting of two sapling oaks, one for the new Schaghticokes<sup>2</sup> and the other for the Mohawks closed the ceremony except for the benediction.

The 1676 tough, white oak of the Schaghticokes lived well into its third century, finally being uprooted by a 1949 flood of the Hoosick river, while the Mohawk tree lived but a century. Just a few yards from the "Witenagemot" meeting place was the Schaghticokes' "Tawasentha" or cemetery.<sup>3</sup>

The Mahicans believed in a renewal of life after death and held this burial spot in high veneration. Even after the last Mahicans left this area in 1754, Queen Esther, a lineal descendant of Chief Soquon of the Hoosicks, made annual pilgrimages with her warriors and maidens to Schaghticoke from far off St. Regis to their beloved Vale of Peace. Here they danced by moonlight beneath the Witenagemot Oak and scattered sacrificial tokens in their burial ground west of the 1676 Council Tree, said to be the only tree planted in North America for the welfare of the Indians.

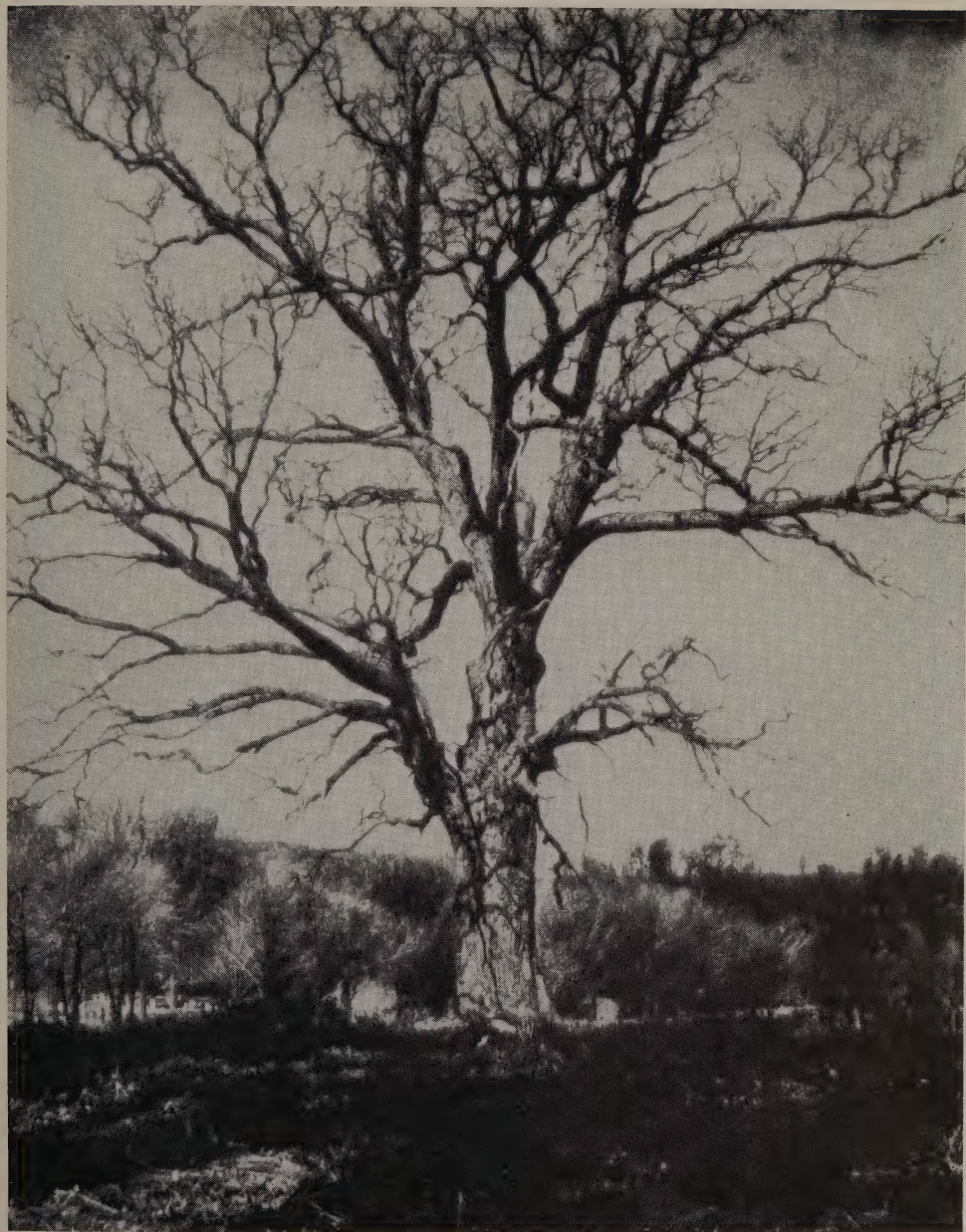
### THE KNICKERBACKER MANSION

Following the guileless Indians came another world wise race of men, for the Knickerbacker Colony was founded directly on the Indian land just a few yards from the Council tree. Pieter Schuyler, first Mayor of Albany, was granted charter privileges for the fer-

<sup>2</sup> *The Hoosick Valley, Legends and History*, Grace Greylock Niles, 1912. G. P. Putnam & Sons, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*





THE WITENAGEMOT OAK. A TREATY TREE OF PEACE AND WELFARE

Planted by the Christians for the Hoosac and Mohawk Scouts, near the junction of the Tomhannac Creek with the Hoosac River, in the Vale of Peace, Old Schaghticoke, New York. Here assembled the first Council of the Christians with Soquon and Maquon after the Hoosac's final victory over Kryn's Mohawks in 1676.





tile cornfields of the Schaghticokes but failed to exercise them. Herman Jansen Knickerbacker, aged 62, came next and negotiated with Chief Soquon for a deed to the Witenagemot Manor. The tract sale was confirmed in 1707. On October 13, 1709 Captain Johannes, son of Herman Knickerbacker leased the first farm and built a log cabin. The colony grew and the first grist-mill and the first saw-mill north of Greenbush on the east side of the Hudson, were erected here.

Then in 1770 the present brick Knickerbacker home was erected which still stands in 1956. This dignified home was a haven for Washington Irving<sup>4</sup> who penned pages for his "Knickerbocker History of New York" here at Schaghticoke. He was much impressed by the many tokens of Dutch Life that he found at the mansion, and it was his great delight to listen to the tales of "Tom Mandolin" a Knickerbacker slave.

General Lafayette visited here in 1825, the guest of the poet<sup>5</sup> Joseph Foster Knickerbacker.

The Manor days of the mansion are gone, together with the old Dutch clock of 1625 which chimed out both birth and death hours and hours of joy and anguish too, after two eventful centuries in this beautiful valley.

The days are getting short too for the old mansion itself so rich in Dutch life. Despite the efforts of two local devotees (Messrs. Hack and Hammersley), the building may soon be torn down. A final appeal made to even one of the country's wealthiest men failed to gain a respite for this old Dutch home which rests in its aboriginal setting.

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<sup>4</sup> *The Hoosick Valley, Legends and History*, Grace Greylock Niles, 1912, G. P. Putnam & Sons, p. 488.

<sup>5</sup> *The Arch of Truth* by J. F. Knickerbacker, 1876, Wm. H. Young, Troy, N. Y. (Loaned by Kathleen Knickerbacker of Ballston Spa.)

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

### WATERFORD'S WATER SYSTEM

SOME ninety years after the incorporation of our Village, or in the winter of 1884-1885, our citizens petitioned the Village Trustees and President Holroyd for a water system. This followed the visit of Mssrs. Hinds and Moffet of Watertown, N. Y., who after financial aid from several Waterford businessmen, agreed to erect the system. The villagers' petition was approved on April 6, 1885, and the first tests of this private system was made on April 16, 1886.

In the meanwhile the Northside Fire District was organized and was given 24 hydrants at an annual rental of \$1,200.00. The Village itself was provided with 22 hydrants at a similar rental of \$1,100.00 per annum. In December of 1908 the Riverside Water District was formed and likewise was furnished with hydrants and water for mechanical and domestic use enjoyed by both the Village and Northside residents on a meter basis.

The original works then consisted of from seven to eight miles of cast iron mains ranging in size from four to ten inches. The two Worthington pumps are of the compound duplex type which with condensers and other devices are capable of pumping one million gallons of water each 24 hours. In an emergency this rate may be doubled by raising the pump's speed.

The water is pumped to a tank or standpipe 30 feet in diameter and 62 feet high atop or near the Prospect Hill Community, and was erected in 1886. The top of the tank is about 190 feet above Broad Street and as such can throw water above the highest buildings in the village.

The system is known as a combination gravity job. When the tank is full the pressure in the mains is 82 pounds. When the tank is full or the valve leading to the tank is closed and the pumps working, the pressure in the mains mounts from 95 to 100 pounds, although when accepted on April 16, 1886 the pipes in the village



system were tested to a pressure of 150 to 170 pounds per square inch.

In 1899, standpipe No. 2 was erected in the Northside area near Grace Street. It stands upon the solid Snake Hill shale of that area and is 45 feet in diameter and 28 feet high. Both standpipes No. 1 and No. 2 are made of wrought iron sheets having a maximum tensile strength of 66,000 pounds per square inch. The tank metal of the bottom sheets is one-half inch thick, while at the top it measures three-sixteenths of an inch.

When the Water Works was first installed it took its water from the Hudson River 500 feet above the village limits and 150 feet from and at right angles from the shore line. During the first winter this intake pipe was swept by the Hudson's ice which in those early days was far heavier and more destructive than now, due now to a warmer modification of our climate.

This pipe destruction became an annual occurrence until a change was made. A rock trench was excavated on the river's bed 220 feet downstream on an angle of 45 degrees, toward the "Point of Rocks" and thence 109 feet from the shore, in which a 12 inch pipe was laid equipped with a cast iron bell and spigot pipe.

During the early years the water was pumped and used directly from the Hudson River and both diphtheria and typhoid fever were locally prominent. In 1889 the Village Health Officer declared these diseases were fostered by the numerous "dead ends" then prevalent in the system. The people he said, used water sparingly, on account of the meters, and the water at such zones became stagnant with disease. He advised five re-connections, five being in the Northside area where the health menace centered.

On April 16, 1886 the Knickerbocker Steamer boys gave the new system a severe test which pleased the villagers. With tank pressure alone and with three hydrants open at the same time at two village blocks apart, water was thrown over the steeple of the Town Hall tower. The distance the water was thrown horizontally under these conditions, was 152 feet.

In the Northside area with direct pressure from the tanks, the water was thrown 110 feet vertically and 140 feet horizontally. With

the tank valved off and the pumps running, the water was thrown horizontally 175 feet.

The first fire under which the new system was tested occurred on April 13, 1886 at the home of Patrick Brown on the west side of Fourth Street between Hudson and Division Streets. The building was an old dry frame structure and burned with incredible speed at 1 o'clock in the morning, the sleepers barely escaping from the flames. The firemen with two lines of hose, had the fire under control in less than ten minutes and it was quickly "squelched." This incident proved the worth of the new system as no water was then available in the Champlain canal for the steamers, the nearest water supply being 1500 feet from the fire, if the new equipment had not been available.

This new water supply and fire protection had a direct affect upon the economic life of the Village and Town. New industries settled along King's Canal into which 1743 feet of six inch water pipe was laid. During this work 15,885 lineal feet of pipe was also dug in underlying rock and 468 feet under the same conditions for hydrants.

The pumps at the Water Works were started on March 31, 1886 and westward connections were dug and made under the Champlain Canal at Broad Street the same day at a cost of \$500.00.

The system was tested by the contractors on April 2, 1886 and water turned on the Northside section the same day, acceptance of this area being made by Northside officials on April 16, 1886.

The official test of the Waterford zone was made on April 10, 1886 and the Water Works accepted by the Village Trustees on April 19, 1886. On October 11, 1912, Water Commissioners, J. W. Ford, C. H. Kavanaugh, James Meeker and Charles H. Shoemaker recommended that Waterford Village purchase and adopt the franchise and equipment of the Waterford Water Works and to further improve the system by addition of mechanical filtration units. The cost of the old system was \$92,500.00 and the cost of the filtration units \$47,500.00.

The filtration or water purification of Waterford's water supply is doubtless the best health investment that our community has ever made.

Typhoid and other diseases connected with impure water have totally disappeared. The water purification is an interesting process and requires constant care as the seasons change. The chemicals are limited in the quantity used by law, and as they are added to the river water the sediment coagulates and becomes visible in ball like forms.

These and other impurities are then removed as they are caught by specially prepared sand filter beds. These beds must be and are, cleansed regularly according to tests. The finished Waterford water is also regularly tested by a licensed water expert and its purity thereby insured. Our geographical position is unfortunate as regards the taste of the water. At Mechanicville are located great manufacturing plants which may cause a taste, objectionable to some. Future State laws, it is hoped, may correct this trouble.

The growing suburban population and new industries are making increased demands upon our water supply. Fortunately the builders of our plant, some three score years ago, put real quality into both planning and the pumping units.

Even today with the increased demands, our factor of supply is still above present needs. Simple plans are in reserve too, for any future or probable requirements.

Over the years Waterford has had competent Superintendents and an able corps of assistants. The Commissioners or Water Board are supposedly and doubtfully non-political in character, composed generally of Waterford business men, many of whom have served for long periods. They are five in number, and they work on a night shift basis without compensation. They are appointed by the Supervisor when vacancies occur. For the past decade the Commissioners have generally been men of the supervisors' own party. Several operators of the filter plant are licensed by the State.

During the past years the hydrant fee of \$2300.00, supposed to be paid annually by the Village and Northside has faded away. Probably they decided it was merely a transferable tax. Thus when filtration chemicals double and labor costs rise all the citizens must pay more for their water. In spite of these increases Waterford's water cost per home is actually half that of surrounding cities.

In spite of its age the Waterford Water Works has been classed by the New York State Health Department as one of the best.



Home building beyond the village limits began to multiply after War II in Northside's "Clementville," and also at the Swazy Acres and beyond on the road to Halfmoon village.

This put new demands upon the 70 year old Waterford Works for certain homes not more than 1 3/10 miles from the plant, on Saratoga County, Road No. 96.

For homes built in the Halfmoon area near the northwestern Waterford town line (Route No. 97), a new pumping plant together with settling and filtration tanks will be needed. This would be a separate water district using Mohawk water. Such a plan would provide ample water and fire protection for hundreds of homes in western Waterford, Halfmoon, Middletown and Clifton Park and would give great impetus to home building in one of the finest residential zones in this whole area. This proposed new water project is necessary because of the age of the old Waterford system and the fact that the latter and its tanks are about due for an overhaul. This latter task should include a second or duplicate water inlet pipe from the Hudson river. This is a vital need in case of an accident to the single entry pipe now in use.

This author greatly favors a new drilling operation near the old "Sand Bank" to verify that a great and ample supply of good water exists adjacent or alongside the long range of hills west of Waterford. This zone is believed to be the hidden pre-glacial bed of the ancient Hudson River. Four evidences of this fancied water supply exist. In 1874 the Munsion Mills boasted of their pure artesian wells as they produced silk garments. A flowing six inch stream bubbled out at the Ranney Dye works in the 1890's. Still earlier this was Vanderwerken's spring when Waterford had but six dwellings. A bit farther north still adjacent to this hill range was Parker and Meeker's "Crystal" spring, and still beyond near the Waterford-Halfmoon town line was "Cold Spring" indicated on maps a century old.

This hoped-for water supply to rid us of objectionable filtration chemical taste, is not at all visionary.

The city of Schenectady now draws from similar buried beds of the pre-glacial Mohawk River, some 20 million gallons of water per

day, and the authority making that revelation<sup>1</sup> urges other localities having similar water beds to do likewise.

### WATERFORD'S SEWAGE SYSTEM

In the fall of 1885 Civil Engineer Charles K. Moore made a preliminary map for a sewer system for the Village, although Broad Street had a sewer line before that date. About 15,900 feet of pipe were involved on Moore's map. The largest sized pipe was 24 inch and most of the sewers were to pass through the alleys. The pipe was to be glazed, vitrified, stone ware and twenty-two man holes were included in the bid let on April 25, 1886.

The engineer's cost estimate was \$10,000.00 and Emmet Flagler of Troy secured the work on a bid of \$10,125.55, the work to be done in 90 days.<sup>2</sup>

Since 1886 the village sewage lines have been extended. It now has approximately  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles of 8 to 24 inch pipe.<sup>3</sup> The smaller eight inch sizes are in the older areas of the village, the pipe sizes increasing gradually to the 18 inch, 20 inch and 24 inch sizes as the three Mohawk and Hudson river outlets are reached. The Hudson's outlet is at "Stink Creek." Others go into the Mohawk at lower First Street and the Creek on Mohawk Avenue. Thirty-four per cent of the sewers is of the 12 inch size, 27 per cent is 8 inch, 15 per cent is 15 inch with the other sizes in proportion.

The only serious impediment to the sewer service is the occasional very high or flood waters in the Mohawk and Hudson rivers, which impairs the run off. The disposal of our sewage into the rivers contributes to the "C" quality of the Hudson's water.

This river disposal method of sewage of the settlements along the Hudson has existed since the earliest of days. While in every sense it has become outmoded, the substitution of the modern method of sewage wastes would at this time place Waterford in most serious financial difficulties.

Almost all new real estate developments in Waterford and else-

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1 Buried Preglacial Ground Water Channels, Simpson, 1949, *Economic Geology*, Vol. 44.

2 *Waterford Advertiser*, May 17 and 21, 1886.

3 Map of Village Engineer Robert Halpin, April 15, 1953.

where depend upon the septic tank method, which in the main, when enlarged, was once the answer to sewage disposal of large cities such as Rochester, New York.

Waterford hopes for a similar method in the years to come. Without doubt the unused swamps (once Kerwin's) north of the railroad embankment could serve a very useful purpose as a modern sewage disposal site for Waterford.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

### WATERFORD'S FIRE DEPARTMENT

WATERFORD'S present four volunteer fire companies have, together with their predecessors, served our community faithfully and well for one hundred and sixty-two years or back to the Charter days of 1794, when the Housekeepers of Waterford, as they were then called, were compelled to furnish themselves with fire buckets and necessary implements for the extinguishing of fire."<sup>1</sup>

Not less than fifteen of these early men were also designated by the same Charter to care for our fire engine tools and instruments used to extinguish fires. As the early program developed the citizens were all compelled to attend and fight fires or pay a fine of forty shillings. Nothing distinguished the leader from other workers except a white handkerchief worn upon the sleeve or some similar badge upon the hat so that he might be recognized and his commands obeyed.

The Town Corporation met on March 14, 1833 and the fire wardens were directed at times of fire, to go through their wards and give the alarm to each dwelling, store and shop therein, and then turn out without delay with their fire buckets. Arriving at the fire, the wardens were to assist the town President and Trustees to carry water. One year later the Trustees passed a bill to buy a fire bell.<sup>2</sup>

This 1833 Town meeting called for the purpose of organizing for fires, followed a severe \$50,000.00 fire on King's Canal which destroyed several shops and buildings together with two completed Button fire engines.

Waterford's desire to modernize her fire fighting customs seemed to continue, for on May 6, 1834 a bill was passed by the New York

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<sup>1</sup> An Act to Appoint Trustees and etc. Laws of New York, Chapt. 36—Laws 1794.

<sup>2</sup> *Waterford Atlas*, January 24, 1834.

State Legislature to incorporate the "Village Fire Company of Waterford."<sup>3</sup>

As the years passed the fire fighting groups except the Knickerbockers, changed their names from time to time, and the latter company once had a "Foreman" instead of a Captain. Thomas Breslin in 1861 was Foreman of Knickerbocker Company, No. 1 with Thomas A. Knickerbacker as first Assistant. In the same year we had a Breslin Hose, No. 1, a Hudson Engine Company, No. 2 and a Hudson Hose Company No. 2.<sup>4</sup> Sometime between 1834 and 1859 we also had a Village Bell Ringer to give fire alarms.

Our present firemen in diligently protecting us from the great destroyer are following a tradition over five generations old. They turn out in fair weather and foul; in rain or snow and in the darkness as in the light. They drop tools and trade, and forsake sleep too, at the ominous sound of the fire bell or siren.

These 1956 firemen disregarding personal danger, know that the first important truth of firefighting is to get there fast before the fire gets control for the dread fire's first few seconds are those that count the most.

The 1956 Chief of the Waterford Fire Department was Mr. Lionel Bechard, followed later by Raymond Rocque.

Other civic duties are also thrust upon these men. This extends to both flood control and Civil Defense and also to aid those citizens hurriedly needing hospital care. At such times the ambulance is as important as the pumper or hose and ladder truck.

#### THE KNICKERBOCKER STEAMER COMPANY NO. 1

This is the dean of all the fire fighting groups in Waterford. It succeeded the Protection Engine Company No. 1 which was organized in 1812 and existed until about 1841. At that time no company name was chosen. The Knickerbocker's first meeting was "for forming a company to have charge of Protection Engine No. One." On August 2, 1847, and in the minutes of that date, the secretary wrote, "A motion was made and carried that this company adopt the name of Knickerbacker." The recording secretary seemingly misspelled

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<sup>3</sup> *Waterford Atlas*, May 1834.

<sup>4</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, January 12, 1861.

the word, using an "a" in lieu of an "o" in the "backer" part. Thereafter the organization's name in all the company minutes was spelled "Knickerbocker," and in the By-laws printed in 1847 the spelling is "Knickerbocker." Older members then asserted with emphasis that the word was spelled with an "o" because the company was named in honor of the old Dutch Knickerbocker family and not in honor of John Knickerbacker, a gentleman then a resident of the village.<sup>5</sup>

The first fire house, a low brick structure, with no floor, stood on the east portion of the lot then owned (1885) and partly occupied by R. A. Savage. It faced the south, and the lot where the present steamer house stands, was vacant.

Next, a one and one-half brick building was erected upon that vacant lot. This latter building was demolished in 1867 and the present commodious two-story brick structure erected.<sup>6</sup>

The first "engine" of the Protection company was a "goose neck" hand pumper made by James Smith of New York in 1812.

In 1847 the "goose neck" was superseded by a "piano box" hand pumper made by Waterford's Lysander Button. The Knickerbocker's next machine was called No. 1 by the firemen who were then nearly all experienced "Button" fire engine builders. It was said by these men that she was the "gem" of this section, and was a "wonder" in those stirring hand pumper engine days.

In 1865 the company bid good-bye to old No. 1 and then received a third engine, this time a Button steam fire engine. In 1865 the steamer, by orders of the Village Trustees, bore the name of the D. B. King, a popular Village president. In 1874 the steamer again resumed the name of the "Knickerbocker."

From 1834 until 1917 both the Button hand pumpers and Steamers were famous throughout the United States and even beyond.

The great team work of Button fire engines and the firemen who both built and used them, made the name "Knickerbocker" almost famous. Even the firemen of the city of Albany called our Knickerbocker firemen a "crack company."

The Knickerbockers under the training of Brig. General James

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<sup>5</sup> Knickerbocker Steamer Co. No. 1 By-laws Adopted July 6, 1885, pp. 27-28.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*



H. Lloyd entered the competitive drill field in 1882. In a startling manner they met in a Statewide contest all comers on the firemen drill field and defeated them in true David and Goliath style. This event took place in Rochester on August 18, 1882.

In that city our modest men were dubbed "farmers."<sup>7</sup> Feeling the cool and silent reception given them, they retired early on the 17th in grim preparation for the stiff contest. Arising early in the 18th they quietly went through a bit of practice. When in the afternoon smartly dressed in red shirts, black pants and firemen's hats they put on the best show of the day, Rochester and its press gave them unbounded admiration. The city folk even bid highly for possession of the bits of silk they wore as badges. Their winning score was  $95\frac{1}{2}$  against a low of  $63\frac{3}{4}$ .

The few unrelenting Rochester critics declared, and stuck to it, that our winning Waterfordians really were "West Point Cadets" in disguise.

At home again they were the idols of the whole Capitol District

This was but one of the many distinctions, prizes, and trophies that the Knickerbockers won or were awarded at or from Albany, Greenwich, Sandy Hill, Fort Edward, Kingston, Pittsfield and San Francisco.

With all this victory and homage earned by their former teammates all present and future Knickerbocker firemen have a proud heritage to remember and to uphold.

The 25th Anniversary Celebration and Banquet of the Knickerbocker Drill Corps was held at the old Town Hall on Saturday, August 17, 1907 with Brig. General James H. Lloyd as Drill Corps Commander giving a toast at the request of Chief Edward J. Kelvington (Toastmaster), followed by others from Village Persident Anthony J. Weaver, Stephen V. Lewis, C. A. Waldron and William L. Terry.

The first Annual Ball of the Knickerbocker Steamer Company was held on February 12, 1852 and it afterward became a looked for attraction among Waterford firemen and their friends. In later years the Ball was held at Thanksgiving time.

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<sup>7</sup> *Waterford Times*, August 7, 1907.

On Thanksgiving evening November 26, 1952 the Knickerbocker Steamer Company, then ninety-four strong and resplendent in new uniforms, met at the New York State Armory at Troy, together with the Knickerbocker Ladies Auxiliary. This was to commemorate their One Hundredth Annual Ball. With reminiscences and nearly a century and a half of public useful service behind them the "Knics" and their guests had a most enjoyable evening.

The present company strength of the Knickerbocker Steamer Company No. 1 is one hundred and five men.

The 1956 Officers are: *President*, Donald Dudden; *Vice President*, Charles Rocque; *Captain*, Warren Rasmussen; *First Assistant*, Warren Bull; *Second Assistant*, Richard Tracy; *Secretary*, James Hillis; *Treasurer*, Stanley Brierley; *Steward*, Chester Price; *Delegate*, Francis Akin; *Alternate*, James L. Gorham, Sr.

#### THE C. H. KAVANAUGH HOOK AND LADDER COMPANY NO. 1

The C. H. Kavanaugh Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 was organized October 1, 1900. Since its organization it has been quartered in Fourth Street, next to School No. 1.

Thomas H. Morris was elected the first President. The other officers and charter members follow:

#### CHARTER MEMBERS

Thomas H. Morris, *President*  
William Tierney, *Vice President*  
Harry A. Holmes, *Captain*  
Edward Kelvington, *First Assistant*  
William Harriman, *Second Assistant*  
Fred P. Waldron, *Recording Secretary*  
Howard Van Santvoord, *Financial Secretary*  
Edward Laughlin, *Treasurer*

and. Fred S. Robinson, Ralph H. Dean, Edward Kelvington, John G. Cole, Harry Sherwin, Louis Whitney, George D. Slade, John Vogel, Norman Falconer, Edwin R. Lewis, Louis R. Breslin, William Harriman, Timothy J. Scannell, Abner J. Harris, Luther J.

Smith, Charles Wolf, William F. Laughlin, Thomas H. Morris, Fred P. Waldron, Edward Laughlin, William DeFreest, John D. Dickson, T. Fred Bootman, William F. Palmer, Howard K. McHaffie, Elbert S. Platt, William Wolf, T. Edgar Breslin, Thomas J. Evers, Howard Van Santvoord, Harry A. Holmes, William Tierney, Robert McHaffie, Edward Cole, Arthur Harriman.

In March, 1955, two charter members survived, Elbert S. Platt and William F. Laughlin. The oldest active member on duty was Roger Harney, who joined in 1922.

During its period of service three members were honored by appointment as Chief Engineer of the Department: Edward Kelvington, Harry Peek, Frank Vandenburg.

The first apparatus was a hand-drawn truck. This was motorized in 1935, by adapting it to a gasoline powered tractor. The converted equipment was continued in service until 1952.

In 1952 a combination pumper and hook and ladder was assigned to the Company. So modern and complete was the new equipment that, under Waterford Firemen, it won first prize at the Altamont firemen's contest, while on its way to Waterford. Thus it happened it became a prize winner for the Company before it came into possession of the organization.

With the permission of the Village Board, the Company has an authorized strength of 75 men. The following are the officers for 1955: *President*, John J. Cassidy; *Vice-President*, Lester Vanderwerken; *Secretary*, Gerino J. Catallo; *Treasurer*, David A. Catallo; *Captain*, Frank Vandenburg; *First Assistant Captain*, James Mullahey, *Second Assistant Captain*, Fred Searle.

The Kavanaughs need and are anticipating new headquarters, the present Fourth street quarters near School No. 1 being cramped and outmoded.

## THE J. W. FORD HOSE COMPANY, NO. 2

This group of West Waterford firemen, named after a prominent knit goods manufacturer, was organized June 14, 1899. Twenty-seven members composed the original roll, although thirty-one firemen were later judged to be charter members. The business minutes



of this group of fire fighters are complete and historic and reflect credit upon their organization.

The location of the Ford headquarters is well chosen in relation to the community it serves. It is also historic, being placed on the old land once known as the "Common."

After a group meeting of the interested citizens, the Village Trustees recognized the company on June 27, 1899 and gave it a Hose Cart and 500 feet of hose. They had no headquarters at first and stored their equipment in Father Curran's barn in West Waterford.

The Ford's first President was John F. Singleton and the Captain, William O'Connor. Headed by a full band the Company first paraded in Waterford on June 30, 1899. On Labor Day of 1900, the Fords, resplendent in new uniforms, won first prize at the Firemen's meet at Cohoes, New York, being judged the best appearing company in line.

The first fire attended was that of the McKallor-Vandenburgh building at 3:15 a.m. on July 5, 1899. The second blaze was at the W. A. Saxe lumber yard, both fires being on Broad Street.

The firemen were loyal to duty, twenty members being at the first fire and twenty-eight at the second.

Through the excellent bookkeeping of the Fords it was revealed that they had attended on an average of twelve fires per year from 1899 to 1923. The year 1911-1912 was a busy period, forty-three fires being attended. The best period was that of 1921-1923 only six fires requiring their attention.

The first business meetings were held at O'Connor's carpenter-shop. A new hose house for the Ford's was put in the Village budget on March 10, 1902 for \$2500.00 and it was voted favorably on May 5, 1902. Mr. John Ford contributed \$25.00 to help pay for the building lot. The Fords seemingly developed the art of patience for they waited about five years for their permanent headquarters.

Such delays are features of a village's constituted government. Not having ample funds the Trustees gripped the purse strings tightly, while the firemen constantly reminded the village fathers of their fire needs. It was a tug and go, an example being the action of the Village Trustees on March 7, 1904 the latter withholding

\$25.00 due the Fords. The Trustees informed the firemen that the sum was earmarked for a headquarter's heater.

Like most of our firemen's headquarters the Fords have a "homey" place, it being modernized in 1953, with a kitchen and accessories.

The Company has forty-five members, with an additional five honorary members.

In 1955 the President of the Company was Mr. Richard P. Doody and Mr. John McAleavy its Captain.

### THE CHARLES H. KAVANAUGH PARK

This nice resting spot overlooking the Hudson River is Waterford's best Park and is located on the south-east corner of Broad and First Streets.

The donor's intended name for the park could not be discovered but it could be easily called the "Veteran's Park" since a fine, tall monument erected in 1922 by Charles H. Kavanaugh indicates veteran sentiment.

On the monument adorned by armed Marines, with Army and Navy bronze figures are the words: "A Gift from Charles H. Kavanaugh to his Home Town, 1922."

Nearby are the words on the column—

"TO THE GLORY OF GOD  
AND IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE  
OF OUR HEROES WHO SERVED  
IN ALL WARS FOR THE TRIUMPH  
OF RIGHT AND FREEDOM."

Bronze eagles with outspread wings and bronzed U. S. shields lend beauty to the statuary.

On the south-east corner of First and Broad Street too, is the Knox Artillery Train Marker, erected there before Waterford history had been thoroughly studied. This granite Sesqui-Centennial marker of the American Revolution with its bronze plate informs—

"Through this place passed General Henry Knox in the winter of 1775-1776 to deliver to General George Washington in Cam-

bridge, the Train of Artillery from Fort Ticonderoga used to force the British Army to evacuate Boston."

General Knox's Artillery did not pass this identical spot, however. Failing because of thin ice to cross the Hudson at the "Lansing" ferry, one mile north of Broad Street it went over to West Waterford and thence over the Fonda military road to Loudon's ferry where it crossed the Mohawk, on the way to Albany and Boston.

However, since the marker has a good and prominent location, and since it states that the Train of Artillery "passed through this place" (meaning Waterford), New York's State Historian, Dr. Albert B. Corey, and Town Historian, Hammersley, recently agreed to maintain the marker at its present location.

### BUTLER PARK

This, the smallest park in Waterford, is a triangular plat of only sixty by a hundred feet. It is situated amid a labyrinth of roads in old "Crow Hill" now bearing the more dignified name of West Waterford. Nearby run the tracks of the Albany-Vermont Railroad, and here now is located our principal depot. Being leased to the Delaware and Hudson, the line is known to Waterfordians by the latter name.

Butler Park's claim to antiquity is based principally upon the fact that it is the last remaining bit of ground of Halfmoon's "Common." This latter name is found upon Jno. P. Bleeker's map of 1791. So, in having a Common we rank with Boston. We presume it was named after James Butler, a prominent West-Waterfordian.

The land bearing the park once belonged to Dirck Van der Kar and Albert Van Der Werken, Albert's "gate" being down near "Cahoes" street at another part of the Common.

This land upon which this gate was first placed later came to be part of the Rev. Stephen Bush estate, a place of sylvan beauty before it was invaded by the Barge Canal.

### THE KNICKERBACKER PARK

This Park area on the northeast corner of Broad and First Street, is approximately the same size as the Kavanaugh Park which lies directly opposite on Broad Street.



It was given by Mr. John Knickerbacker to the Town of Waterford some years ago. It is said that it was Mr. Knickerbacker's intention to place a marker upon the plot of ground in commemoration of his parents but this filial act was not consummated.

The Park lies upon historic ground. The Broad and First Street corner of the lot was the site of the Tory Tavern, "The Lion," of the American Revolution, and also was a stopping place for the early stage coaches and travelers. At the end of Broad Street, then called "Ferry Street," steps led to Hamilton and Scott's ferry to Lansingburg.

At the river end, also on Broad Street, was the Union Bridge toll house where Collector Sturgis took the tolls and sold spruce beer to passing travelers.

#### FLATIRON PARK

This triangular park, becoming increasingly smaller with the years, is in front of St. Mary's Church. It was once adorned annually at Christmas by the lively Lions Club with a lighted Christmas tree but beautified during later years by a Manger scene. The Park goes back to April 5, 1827 and required trustees appointed by the court to replace those who died.

On the above day and date Foster King and wife Lucy with James Taylor and wife Sarah, deeded this piece of ground to Guert Van Schoonhoven, Jacob Stout and Samuel Demarest for \$100.00, the last three men respectively representing the Town, County and State as trustees.

The Park's west boundary was Van Schoonhoven's "Mansion and Courtyard," on the south by Grog Street, on the east by John Gue's land, and on the north by the "road to Ballston."

The Park trustees were bound by the deed to enclose the premises with a suitable fence, with nothing inside but a well, a pump, and suitable trees and shrubbery. By 1887 all the original trustees had passed away and others were appointed by the Supreme Court. Again, those trustees passed on, the last recorded persons being Katherine Platt and Samuel Page.

Then our settlement began to grow and the well in Flatiron Park—"whose honest water had ne'er left a man in the mire," found

itself most unhappily on Grog Street. More indignity was added when the trolley cars came, for they ran directly over it. So the well gave up the fight and the park fence and pump followed shortly after.

For a long time the Park was "no man's land." The "public" mentioned in the original 1827 deed was actually the people outside the village. It was therefore argued that the village had no jurisdiction in the Park, since the trustees had passed away and others had not been reappointed. The property was also likened to the Town Hall. It was in the village but did not properly belong to it.

At last the "right of eminent domain" entered the scene, when shortly after December 24, 1910 the Supreme Court awarded the Village of Waterford, the property.

Of those kindly folk who gave the land and liked that bit of green and a cool cup of water, we know but little.

Foster King was the son of Zadok King whose other son John M. King started King's power canal. Guert Van Schoonhoven was a descendant of Colonel Jacobus Van Schoonhoven, a village founder, while Samuel Demarest was a man who lived near the Park and was also a tavern or hotel-keeper of large possessions.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

### WATERFORD RURAL CEMETERY

THREE ACRES of the Guert Van Schoonhoven farm was the first part of five sections which became our present Rural Cemetery. It was bought by John Cramer (Lawyer), William Scott (Merchant), Edward F. Bullard (Lawyer), George W. Eddy (Iron Founder), William L. Seymour (Lawyer), and Belden Scott (Lumber Merchant), a diversified group of men who were our Village Trustees in 1845. Things were cheaper one hundred and eleven years ago since these Trustees sold a full cemetery lot for five dollars. The place then seemed a long distance from the Village for they called it the "Rural" Cemetery. We also lived like one big family then and people of all faith were buried side by side in this quiet place.

Here some slept for three quarters of a century, until the pious worries of their descendants caused their removal to other places. The plat of ground bought by the village trustees is to this day called the "Village" section, while adjacent to it is a triangular space once known as the "Potters" field. In earlier days the editor of the local paper once wrote that the cemetery was a "favorite grazing place for cows."

Morton C. Powell was clerk<sup>1</sup> for the Village Trustees in 1845 and he started the first cemetery record book. When in 1889 the old burying ground on Fourth Street was sold to become the site for Union Free School No. 1 the existing burials were removed and re-interred in the Waterford Rural Village plot. The markings on these old stones, some dated in the 1700's, are now almost illegible.

Time passed and the Waterford Rural became crowded. Other sections were added until we have today, the Grace Church Section,<sup>2</sup> the Bush plot, the Mott-Waldron section and the Higgins plot. Soon these extra places became filled, the burials crowding close to the Barge Canal and the former New York State Highway Shops.

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<sup>1</sup> *Waterford Times*, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> Map of about Nov. 20, 1847, filed at County Clerk's Office, Ballston.



In the year 1942 the Waterford Rural Cemetery officials bought a large new area west of the Albany and Vermont Railway (the Delaware and Hudson Company). This hillside zone was formerly called "Vinaegar" Hill on old maps, but also better known later as the "Dicky Davis" woods.

After grading the newly purchased land it became a desirable burying spot, not only for our own town's people but also for out of town-folk and those having former Waterford affiliations who were brought home to rest.

### ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH CEMETERY

This is the burial ground of St. Joseph's Catholic Church of Cohoes. It is located one-half mile from St. Mary's Catholic Church in Waterford on the west side of the "upper" Waterford-Halfmoon road and is the resting place for the people of St. Joseph's and St. Marie's, Cohoes, churches and for St. Ann's Northside Catholic Church.

### THE CEMETERY OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL

This cemetery is located on the east side of the "upper" Waterford Halfmoon road eight-tenths of a mile from St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Waterford. It is the burial place selected by and for the parishes of the Ukrainian church of St. Peter and St. Paul's in Cohoes.

### ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERY

This burying ground of Waterford's St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church is situated nine-tenths of a mile from St. Mary's Church in Waterford. It was part of the Palmer farm and was bought by the Rev. Father Michael J. Collins, O.S.A., on August 1, 1868. It is on the east side of the "upper" Waterford-Halfmoon road and was dedicated as a cemetery in 1869. Further details concerning it may be found under the chapter on St. Mary's Waterford Church.

### ST. MICHAEL'S POLISH CHURCH CEMETERY

This cemetery is used by the congregation of St. Michael's Polish Church of Cohoes. It is located on the east side of the "upper" Waterford-Halfmoon road and is situated one and three-tenths miles from St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Waterford.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

### SPORTS AND AMUSEMENTS

OUR FIRST recorded winter pastime of the 1790's was that of sleighing behind a spirited horse or a team. On January of 1852 Mrs. Ormsby's diary says all the village was out in sleighs. This continued down to the 1900's when the Hudson River and other frozen waterways were used for horse racing and ice boating.

Later the men took up "bobbing" and this sport was well received by the Fire Dept. men of Troy also.<sup>1</sup> Waterford people used "Slades" hill for bobbing until crossing the Hudson Valley electric tracks at Third Street made this perilous.

When the warm weather came the same old Hudson was as popular for boating as for horseracing. Boats could be rented from liveries, and an old diary says it was a pleasant and a common way to spend an evening.

In 1884 Waterford had a roller-skating rink and even before then croquet was a popular pastime. Church and Sunday School picnics were always welcome. Peebles Island was a popular picnic spot and during the summer of 1867 several organizations from Troy joined Waterford groups at that place. Bald Mountain, introduced to Waterfordians by Rafinesque in 1833, was also a favorite place for picnics. In August of 1880 thirty-two Waterford teams and two carriages containing picnickers started for the mountain top at eight in the morning. After a fine day they arrived home at 8 p.m.

It now appears that we were more religious in the early days. From 1850 to 1868 Camp Meetings were held at Fitzgerald's Grove with the crowds so great as to require extra conveyances.

While in the 1890's Waterford and Cohoes grew to be great rivals in the football world, relations were good in 1875. In that year Waterford and Cohoes engaged in a spelling match at our Town Hall. Cohoes won.

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<sup>1</sup> *Troy Times*, March 4, 1887.

In 1861, 2000 persons from Lansingburg, Cohoes and Waterford collected near the Union Bridge to witness a foot-race over that darkened structure. The contestants were Waterfordian George W. Van Norden and a man named Murphy from Cohoes.

Van Norden won the race, but it brought on a feud between the Cohoes Cataract and the Waterford Sentinel which did not cease until both of these newspapers retired from business. (*Waterford Sentinel*, Mar. 23, 1861.)

### BICYCLE RIDING

The bicycle craze reached its height about 1898.<sup>2</sup> Waterford had long racks offering bicycles for hire. Not all such equipment was by any means rented only to boys and girls. The men and women too, were enthusiasts and had their own Y.M.C.A. riding associations and "side paths" which were cared for by membership dues. These paths led from town to city and were crowded by riders on single or tandem machines during the long summer evenings and the week-ends. Some of these bicycles had great curving handle bars called "rams horns." This was an early attempt to escape wind resistance, for it brought the rider's head downward, putting him in the "scorcher" class composed of fast-going, hard-riding, individuals.

Another discussion point among riders centered about the selection of a small or large "sprocket" or gear which motioned the bicycle driving chain. The small gear required rapid leg motion but turned over easier. The large gear reduced this leg speed, but took more muscle to get the bicycle under way.

Punctures have always been a distressful feature of touring, both then and now. In bicycle days the wise rider rarely ventured forth without his little leather repair kit. This contained patches, rubber cement and a short pump. For a large hole in a "single" tube several rubber bands were used.

These were stretched out on a stick or wire notched on the end, doused with rubber cement and jabbed into the puncture hole. When released the bands fattened out and the hole was tightly filled. After "pumping up" the rider was soon on his way again. We have always had inventors. I once saw a man of this type who hoped to fix small

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<sup>2</sup> *Troy Times*, April 29, 1898 and July 26, 1898.



leaks almost before they occurred. He had apparently filled his tires with molasses or the like. Without his knowledge, he had incurred a large leak in his rear tire. At each turn of the wheel the back of his light coat was being nicely daubed with a wide stripe of sticky mixture as the wheel revolved and threw the brown juice upward.

### THE YACHT CLUBS

In the summer season of 1898 the Hudson River with its wide stretch of smooth waters above the state dam, was the scene of happy boating.

The Troy Yacht Club was organized in 1888 and on July 28, 1898 had eight steam yachts, and ten other vessels. Its Commodore was N. L. Weatherby. At that time the Shenandoah Club on Green Island also was active having 84 members and 18 vessels.<sup>3</sup>

The annual regatta of these boat clubs was held on Labor Day. It is believed that the Troy Yacht club was finally re-named the Laureate Boat Club sometime in the early 1900's.

Waterford's boating record would be incomplete without mention of its home-made end wheeler the *Neptune*. This distinctive boat and every last thing in it, boiler, engine, bunks and tables were hand-made by its Waterford Club members. Every year they ventured forth to enjoy the then wonderful fishing at East Creek on Lake Champlain and many Waterford men were made happy by being included in the group. On August 6, 1898 some thirty-five young people enjoyed a *Neptune* moonlight sail upon the beautiful Hudson.

When old *Neptune* became leaky and no longer seaworthy, she was pulled ashore by a D. & H. man, Malthaner, on East Creek, and thenceforth bore his name as a club house.

### THE WATERFORD ROUGH RIDERS

From its name, this aggressive group of football enthusiasts probably came into being about Spanish War time. They were a tough, fast team and were rarely beaten in a fair game. We think its team mates were first composed of Waterford Y.M.C.A. men and included the noted Epps (Negro) boys whom their team mates defended valiantly when the former were rough play victims.

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<sup>3</sup> *Troy Times*, July 28, 1898.

The climax game (always versus Cohoes) was held on Thanksgiving day and it was a calamity should any Waterford sporting person be compelled to miss it. Near the end of a game, should the score be tied, the only ball might then be booted over the fence (near an icehouse) and the game was over. The rivalry became so keen between Waterford and Cohoes, that the games between these teams were transferred to the Troy Laurette grounds and even there the last season's game ended in a riot.

#### SPORTS RECORD, WATERFORD HIGH SCHOOL, 1931-1956

Waterford has taken an active part in all phases of sport for well over three-quarters of a century. In later years and under proper guidance, Waterford school boys have written their names brightly in sporting history.

The Waterford High School scholars under Coach Fred T. Morris<sup>4</sup> for example, have become leaders and widely known winners not only in the Troy zone but in a very large area beyond. This competitive field touches Whitehall, the Catskills, Fort Plain and extends into the New England States.

Under Morris's discipline and strategy these young men have brought home to Waterford no less than fifty hard won cups and trophies during the twenty-five years of his continuous leadership.

These were taken in seven separate fields of sport, namely, Baseball (4 cups) Basketball (10), Cross-Country running (20), Soccer (4), Track meets (1), Tennis (2), Bowling (7), together with a cup for a radio sports Quizz, and another for a win in the arts field. This large number of prizes were taken in severe competition, some of the "meets" being known as "invitation" matches.

This organized urge to win probably started in 1931 when the Waterford Soccer team topped the Inter-Scholastic League of the Troy area. As a result of town pride the winners were then given

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<sup>4</sup> Coach Morris is a career athlete. He was born in Waterford and has guided Waterford High School sports activities for twenty-five years.

Besides attending and entering into the sports of the Waterford and Lansingburg Schools he attended both Syracuse and Ithaca colleges. He there won his letters in both basketball and track. During his high school days he won the New York State Championship Shot-Put and after leaving College played professional basketball for eight years.

a cup several feet tall by a local business man. For the ten years following, the sports program was conducted under general competitive rules. Then the New York State Athletic Association entered the field and our school athletes now compete in the Section II class.

Our Waterford boys especially shine in cross-country running and other long races. In 1934, 1935 and 1937 they won the seven mile Troy Marathon races. Under a New York State ruling these Marathons are no longer permitted for High School scholars.

In 1932 the School's basketball team won twenty-six straight games. Prominent among its basketball stars were—Nick Patton, William J. Brown, Jr., Joseph Willets, Gerald and Joseph Schofield, Frank Dunn, Jr., and Don Baker. This 1932 team also was "runner up" at the Eastern States Tournament at Glens Falls.

Since 1948 the Waterford athletes have won the Section II Varsity Cross-Country Championships during six of eight years, together with winning the Junior Varsity prize seven times.

Scholars cannot enter these State governed sports until they are 14 years of age. The average team age is between 16 or 17 years. Before participating in the sports program they are given a medical examination. This is a wise improvement on the practices of years ago.

This author in preparation for a two mile run at Albany was given an initial and continuous run of six miles. To make it worse our team was instructed to "run on its toes." The few runners who managed to complete this "trial" run were incapacitated for days because of our instructor's stupidity.

The high school boys of today are built into winners by slow and gradual training after the medical examination. While today's cross-country's runners may cover practice runs of about 150 miles over their ten weeks training course, they are permitted to run only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles in a single race. To be a cross-country winner, nothing but the "will to win" is needed. Strange to add these boys are said to gain from three to five pounds in weight during the course. Further, not a single heart case has resulted in the past 25 years of Waterford's athletic training. Much of the credit for this record is due to Coach Morris's guidance and perception. He leads by example for this coach does not smoke.



It is regretted that these young men so finely trained into winners often dissipate this valuable physical reserve by later smoking and drinking.

Many of Waterford's athletes have left our school to enter college and there have become stars.

Among the last of these was Ron Gillespie who Captained the Syracuse Basketball team of 1955-1956 and who was voted one of the East's best players.

## CHAPTER FORTY

### WATERFORDIANS I HAVE KNOWN

WILLIAM M. THACKERAY in *Vanity Fair* shows us almost every type of which the human family is composed. This suggests the revelations of Waterfordians that I have known.

Included will be the high and the low, who are simultaneously the rich and the poor. The rich will be shown at the top of the ladder and our humble poor at the bottom, for that is the way of life.

#### THE MANUFACTURER

The horse and buggy days had gone and the horseless carriage was here. Waterford probably had two autos at this time. Since men seem to be merely boys who have grown up, the actual first auto owner, a very rich man, was proud of his new machine. In fact we have a copy of a letter in which he insisted to the auto maker that the new machine **MUST BE** delivered in time for the Cambridge Fair. He must "show it off."

To complete the picture of his opulence he hired a chauffeur in a long duster who was to pilot the auto when it arrived.

This chauffeur who had an independent but kindly spirit started with milord for a thirty mile drive. Soon on their way and less than half way to their destination, the chauffeur espied another rare auto becalmed by the roadside merely lacking the proverbial "horse shoe nail."

The kindly Waterford driver, acting without orders, came to a stop and gave from the rich man's store a most trivial nut, split pin, or the like to the stranded motorist.

Under way again, the chauffeur was tapped on the shoulder by the rich owner and berated for giving away even such a trifle. This brought on a sudden war between the two. The chauffeur stopped the car, and quit on the spot inviting Mr. Croesus to thenceforth drive his own car. Both got home again somehow, but the chauffeur could never get a similar job again after the fracas.

Mr. Auto Owner studiously became a Nemesis and in order to feed his family the chauffeur had to start a new business of his own.

### THE DEACON

As we descend the financial and social ladder we come to a well-to-do, church going executive. This man sat in church one Sabbath morn and was soon fast asleep, unnoticed by his wife who sat on the further end of the pew. Your author sat directly behind the sleepy one and saw his head wag and heard his first loud snore. Wifey heard it too and slid quickly to husband's side giving a not too gentle push at his arm. Then the whole church became involved. The preacher stopped the service while others came up with smelling salts. Just why they all supposed the worshipper was ill, we shall never know. The awakened sleeper who as dazed by the commotion that he had almost innocently caused, seemingly played it safe. He just sat still and refused to talk. A doctor came too but could find no trace of illness, just as we could have predicted. Of all the audience only I knew the truth of that incident.

### OUR DRUGGIST

Then comes our drug store man. In my very tender years he, in a fit of exuberance, demanded of me one day, "What do you think of the PROCLAMATION OF EMANCIPATION?" It happened that the subject was then quite new to me, but I finally managed to master its intricacies.

### OUR RAGMAN

We are coming down the ladder fast now to Peter, our rag vending man. Poor Pete was a sad looking fellow with a long Pinocchio-like nose. He drove a horse equally sad and woe-begone. While Peter's ribs did not show, his horse's did, for the latter always hauled heavy loads, plus Peter. In fact because of the horse's perpetual rib show, we town boys asserted, with a more or less inward belief, that Pete actually fed his nag on nothing but saw dust.

The last sad day arrived when Pete's black beauty decided to end it all. He just lay down in the street, harness and all, and proceeded to die.

His owner, goggle and rhumey eyed with genuine surprise at the sight of his now dead charger, said to a passer-by, "He never did that before!"



### THE "BATTERY" WOMAN

On the bottom ladder round, both mentally and socially, was the old lady who lived on the "Battery." We looked one day from the Mohawk bridge and spied this woman attempting flood control, for the Mohawk river was on a high water rampage. The street was flooded and the lady's front porch and hall were just awash. With the front door open, she seemed undismayed as she continued to sweep quite futilely, at the rapidly rising river.

### THE MAN OF ACTION

In between the high and the low now appears an average or a middle class Waterford citizen. This was Mr. William or "Bill" Rice, a man whom we desire to honor. Bill stood high in his signal tower early one evening confronted by a host of important levers. These controlled the signals and traffic at a busy and important railroad crossing beneath him. In the early 1900's the Delaware and Hudson Railway was crossed here by the rather new Hudson Valley electric line. Until this fateful evening Bill's job had not been too complicated. The steam railway of course had the right of way and the electrics usually waited until the crossing was clear. Bill had a final recourse to enforce this, which was a lever which could de-rail the steam cars. It had never been used or even tried.

A serious electric railroad strike was now in progress with armed troops aboard the trolleys with one off-schedule electric car about to cross the Delaware and Hudson tracks. Coming at the same instant from the south was a fast moving freight train. William Rice had but a split second to evaluate a new situation and to make a decision. Unless he acted at once thirty or forty soldiers might be cut to pieces by the heavy freight train. Without hesitation Rice pulled the untried lever which was to hurl the fast freight from its rails. His act saved the lives of many or all of the troops aboard the long trolley.

Tossed from its tracks with its steam still on and the locomotive wheels still spinning, the engine was soon half buried in the road bed. Many of its freight cars were thrown from the rails to be telescoped by the other cars in the rear. No serious injury happened to the freight train crew, however.

Few of us know just how we will act in a new situation, but Rice acted quickly and well. A half century later we accord him a post humus *croix de guerre*, not for bravery on the battlefield, but for life saving and correct thinking in an important emergency.

### VILLAGE HUMOR

In my boyhood days, our village had several middle aged men, who having certain tendencies, had become local celebrities.

One, a native of Erin, had settled in Waterford and had raised a really nice family quite ungifted with their father's shady tendencies. This old Paddy shunned both hat and coat in the nice days of summer and would come down Broad street hatless with sleeves rolled up. Which way he was looking as he passed us, we never could tell, for he had a bad cast in one eye.

As I entered Butlers Barber Shop one day Paddy was just coming out, leaving the barber in a fit of laughter. The barber's merriment must be shared and soon he told me of Paddy's latest questionable exploit.

Waterford at that time was home also to a mill tycoon who was given to globe trotting. He always left his lady at home during his voyages. Whether she was glad to be rid of him for awhile, or whether he objected to the double seagoing fare, we never shall know. He lived in a mansion and his friends were scanty but he did like the good things of life.

It was his annual custom to visit Russel Lee's Meat Market and have the butcher set aside for him certain choice cuts of beef. As these were slowly accumulated, in the late autumn, the meat man tossed them into a barrel of brine to corn against the coming of winter. When snugly full, the barrel was moved to the cellar of the tycoon's mansion.

On the eve of a certain winter, this man, without doubt totally forgetting his cellar's choice cash of corned beef, suddenly departed for Europe.

He placed the foxy and covetous Paddy in charge of his large heating furnace, and the snow shoveling which task would be directed by the lady of the house.

Paddy soon discovered that fine barrel of meat and decided to

own it. Taking off the stone and boards which kept the beef immersed beneath the brine, he removed a large chunk. Placing it close to the great, hot furnace for several days, it soon smelled to high heaven. Next, replacing the bad chunk in the barrel with other good meat, he ascended the stairs and cried aloud "Oh! Mrs. T. Come Down! Come Down! the Meats gone ba—ad."

Taking a hasty sniff at the seemingly offensive barrel the fair lady orderd "Mr. P. get some help at once and remove that awful mess from the cellar!" Paddy gladly complied and after burying the smelly chunk lived happily that winter on prime corned beef, reaping where he had not sown, and caring not a whit for the terrible meeting over the lost meat, that our best meat man and Mr. Tycoon would have when the twain should meet.

#### PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER

Another bit of humor comes from Lansingburg, and was perpetrated by some unknown church wag, and it was not entirely without some justification.

It is a subtle warning to ministers "hanging on" a bit too long to the current and occasional practice of preaching a "series" of sermons upon practically the same theme.

A Lansingburg pastor, for nearly one whole YEAR (says the 1799 newspaper) preached upon the subject of Peter's Wife's Mother. ("Peter's Wife's, Mother, lay ill of a fever.")

It finally wore down the Sexton who decided to put a stop to the well aired subject. His knowledge and feelings on this long essay were naturally more fervent than the rest of the whole congregation. As janitor he must be at church each Sunday while others might obtain a bit of relief by "skipping" church service, now and then.

Finally on one Sabbath morning, the bells of that Lansingburg church tolled so early that the people came dashing out upon the street to inquire of the sexton the cause of this unusual disturbance.

That man, now poker faced, merely pretended ignorance of the clamor, saying that he believed it must be Peter's wife's mother; she had been ill for a long, long, time.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lansingburg Gazetteer*, May 21, 1799.



## CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

### 1771—A WATERFORDIAN, THE FIRST WHITE MAN AT SARATOGA SPRINGS

THE FIRST WHITE MAN who built a habitation at Saratoga Springs and attempted a summertime settlement there was Waterford's Dirck Schouten. He had formerly lived on the bank of the Hudson a little above Waterford. His object in moving to the Saratoga wilderness was to open a trade with the Indians. These then came in the summertime in great numbers to the site of Saratoga Springs.

In 1771 Dirck Schouten went to Saratoga Springs and after clearing a bit of ground, planted a few potatoes. He then built a log cabin on the bluff a little west of the High Rock spring. Schouten stayed at the Springs until he quarreled with the Indians who drove him out in 1773. His place was later made into a crude tavern which was occupied during the summer only. Few were the white visitors then at the Springs, the visits being as much as eleven months apart.

Schouten's original place, which had been enlarged, had but two later owners until the fall of 1787. Then Gideon Morgan bought the place and sold it to another Waterfordian in the same year. The buyer was our Revolutionary scout, Alexander Bryan.

Since Bryan was one of two men who managed to winter at the Springs, he thus became known as the second permanent settler<sup>1</sup> at that place.

After an active thirty years at the Springs, Bryan retired to Schoharie. There he died at an advanced age after a full and eventful life.

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Saratoga County, 1609-1878*. N. B. Sylvester, 1878, pp. 150-151.

*Note: In the Reminiscences of Saratoga* by W. L. Stone, on p. 67, Stone says that Bryan was Saratoga's first permanent settler.

## WATERFORD NOTES AND EVENTS, 1783 TO 1861

*(Waterford in 1783)*

VILLAGE LAND BEFORE INCORPORATION. This is discussed by an anonymous newspaper contributor, who stated, "John I. Van Derwerker deeded on May 7, 1783 (Book of Deeds, Page 350 Albany County) all his farm except half a morgen including cemetery and church grounds to Jacobus Van Schoonhoven, George Palmer, and David Dickenson of Stillwater, Gideon Morgan of Litchfield County, Connecticut, Ezra Hicock of Sheffield (Mass. Bay) and Isaac Averil of King's County."<sup>1</sup> This may have been a prior sale before the village was mapped in 1784. Early Waterford maps still show the half morgen of land on First street and other writings certify to the generosity of the Van Derwerkens as pertain to church and cemetery land.

## "KING'S HIGHWAY"

The road from Waterford to Mechanicville from the first bore many names, the "Great Road," the "King's Highway" and etc. In March 5, 1811 the *Waterford Gazette* described it as the "Great Northern Turnpike" to Canada.

## SOCIETY

Concerning Waterford Society in 1819 it was said "Waterford was now entering upon a social pre-eminence which for thirty years made her the leader in this vicinity in the graces of society, not excepting Troy. Hospitality of the most elegant kind prevails. We have a large number of law offices attracting men of character and prominence who reach eminence. The receptions at Van Schoonhoven's place were brilliant and distinguished. The Cramers and their guests, the Stewarts and Judge Cheever, added their hospitality to the circle. They went at six o'clock and were home by nine."<sup>2</sup>

## LION TAVERN

The LION TAVERN which had been successively kept by Tunis Garribrant in 1774, by Haight in 1814, by Holmes in 1827, and still later by Stephen Titcomb, was a celebrated resort in 1827. In

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<sup>1</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, May 7, 1886.

<sup>2</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, May 7, 1886.

the latter year there were six taverns on the road between Waterford and the (Burrough) Mechanicville.<sup>3</sup> The Lion Tavern was at the "Schouten" corner, northeast corner of First and Broad Streets.

### DAM

In 1823 the Waterford dam across the Mohawk to Peebles Island from the Battery was removed. The dam was removed after New York State erected an unsuccessful sloop lock dam at Troy. The latter was built by a contractor in 1825 and was a success. To compensate Waterford manufacturers for the loss of the Peebles Island dam which ground wheat on the Island and ran another mill on the Battery, the State gave equivalent power on the Champlain Canal at the weigh lock near Nealers.

### EDDY FAMILY

In 1831 The Eddy Family came to Waterford, and G. W. and W. M. Eddy established the printers ink company at what became known as the "lamp black" works.

In 1846 G. W. Eddy established the Mohawk and Hudson Manufacturing Company which developed into the Eddy Valve Company.

### CRIME WAVE

About March 12, 1834 Waterford Village had a minor crime wave. Out of this grew the formation of the "Society for the Prevention of Petty Thefts."

### BROAD STREET PAVED

On September 24, 1834, Broad Street was "paved" in lieu of the old coating of gravel previously upon it.

### FIRST STEAMBOAT

In 1835 it is said, the first Steamboat ran from Waterford to Troy.

### FIRST COAL USED IN WATERFORD

The first coal ever used in Waterford for domestic purposes arrived in 1838. Thirty ton in a sloop was sailed to the "Battery"

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<sup>3</sup> *Waterford Advertiser*, May 7, 1886.



and was purchased by expressman Thomas Robinson, Sr. (1816-1900). He had difficulty in disposing of the coal. People had not then learned to use it.

Mr. Robinson who came to Waterford when ten years of age was our pioneer expressman. He transported cloth from Cohoes by horses and carriage to New York City and returned with cotton. He also carried goods between Waterford and Whitehall.

#### THE "DIAL" IN DIAL CITY, 1846

One of Waterford's everlasting questions has been whether the correct name was "Dial" or Doyle City. The *Waterford Advertiser* on April 9, 1886 definitely establishes the name as Dial City. It printed, "The Main Street of Dial City was opened in 1846. The Dial was then in the street."

#### BROAD STREET'S WATER SUPPLY

Broad Street had its own water line in 1861, which ran eastward to the river. Since the only source then was the Champlain Canal it was of a doubtful character. This was some twenty-five years before the Waterford Water Works existed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Waterford Sentinel*, October 26, 1861.

## CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

### VILLAGE LIVING NEARLY A CENTURY APART—1791 AND 1888

UNDER THE CHAPTER on Rural Life we gave Abby Servat (Peebles) account of slow travel customs. It took twenty-one days to reach Troy from Newport, at a time when Troy had but sixty buildings. She told too, of the difficulty of mail delivery and also how the people enjoyed themselves in the year 1791.

The winter's standard sport in 1791 was driving behind a horse some nine or ten miles in the evening.

Strange it seems that the 1791 custom of sleigh-riding had not changed in 1888 except that social times and good things to eat at country places had been added.

In the account which follows it should be stated that the hotel known in 1888 as "Pratts" had been the site of the Revolutionary Tavern of Alexander Bryan in 1777 and that the "Lew Smith" hotel at Clifton Park also mentioned, is still standing and serving as a hotel.

This present story which recounted the great blizzard of 1888, starts with the ringing of a door bell as a young girl in Waterford arose to greet her young man from Lansingburg, at the stroke of eight. She states that "a number of Lansingburg boys then called on Waterford girls as the latter were noted for their good looks."

The boys would walk over the "old covered bridge," call on the girls, then plan to meet at 10 o'clock at the old Dr. Higgins' drug store, corner of Broad and Third Streets and walk home. The blizzard lasted from March 11th to 14th and it caused a postponement of the "select St. Patrick costume social of the Lansingburg Fake Hook and Ladder Company," to which our young lady had been invited.

This was soon forgotten as up drove a young man with a high stepping horse and shiny cutter with invitations for "a sleighride and

dance at Pratts Hotel for the coming Friday." The group were to meet at the Town Hall at 7:30 sharp and "the closets were ransacked to find overshoes, mittens, hoods, flannel petticoats, leggings, and etc., for the affair." The messenger then went to Cohoes to engage "Josh Peola, and his orchestra for Peola's music would make a wooden man dance; then to John Storm, liveryman, for his long box sleigh, straw in bottom, long side seats to hold thirty or thirty-five persons, buffalo robes, four horses jingling with bells."

"Boys did not call for girls in those days. We all met at our place and took a chance of getting a partner. Thirty-five boys and girls were at the Town Hall, and with a long squeak the sleigh started, we blowing tin fish horns, yelling, laughing, and singing such old songs as *My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean*, *Jingle Bells*, *Seeing Nellie Home*, and *Sweet Adeline* interspersed with hymns like *In the Sweet By and By* and *Nearer My God To THEE* and we could sing, as most of us were members of some church choir."

"Mr. and Mrs. Pratt met us at the porch which was lighted with a large locomotive headlight, and ushered us into the public sitting room, heated by a roaring wood fire. Wraps were laid aside and we made a rush for the ballroom. It being St. Patrick's night, Josh played old Irish airs and we were whirled about until we were dizzy headed."

"The real thrill came when Josh called for a grand march to supper. Boys selected their girls and a steaming oyster stew was served. After our supper the boys went into a huddle to pay the assessment for the sleigh, music and supper, which did not cost as much as an evening's entertainment now. And they rose next morning with clear heads, for while our parties were held at hotels, no intoxicating drinks were served. A girl was something of a dare devil who would drink a claret lemonade with a boy, and there were no cigarette smoking girls then."

"Ready for home we stood in a circle and sang *Auld Lang Syne*. Our trip home was marred by a tip over in front of what was then Judge Porter's home at the Old Fort Inn. The horses had floundered into a big snowbank and the sleigh tipped. We reached home safely and the driver took the boys to Lansingburg."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From *Memories*, I. M. O., *Troy Record*, March 12, 1941.



## 1796—WATERFORD CEMETERY

An early resident, Brainard King, is quoted elsewhere as describing some of our earliest Waterford burial places. The Vanderwerkens are traditionally credited with giving the land for at least two of these cemeteries.

One of these was undoubtedly on John Vanderwerken's "half morgan" of reserved land on First Street, and it faced oblivion in the year 1802.

An old newspaper prints an account that in 1802 only two of the original gravestones remained in that cemetery.

These indicated the burial of Clara Olmstead who died in 1796 and Mrs. Jake Buys who was buried there in 1800.

John Vanderwerken's one acre plot was directly east of old Classic Hall and extended to the Hudson river.

1804—VISIT OF POET THOMAS MOORE TO COHOES FALLS  
AND VAN SCHOONHAVEN HOME

This was the year that the Irish Poet, Thomas Moore, visited the Cohoes Falls and was entertained at the Broad Street home of the Van Schoonhoven's. He was greatly impressed by his view of the Falls and while a guest of the Van Schoonhoven's wrote his ode, the first and last verses being quoted.

From rise of morn, till set of sun,  
I have seen the mighty Mohawk run,  
And as I marked the woods of pine,  
Along his mirror darkly shine.

Oh, may my falls be bright as thine:  
May heaven's forgiving rainbow shine  
Upon the mist that circles me,  
As soft, as now it hangs o'er thee.

## 1807-1847—EVENTS, LOCAL AND OTHERS

1807—On August 17, Robert Fulton's ship the *Clermont* began her first trip from New York City to Albany. It took thirty-two hours.

1816—This was the year of no summer in New England. In the months of July and August ice one-half inch thick was formed.

1824—In this year the country's earliest Engineering and Technical School, The Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute was founded.

1825—On October 26, 1825 the Erie Canal was completed.

1832—Egbert Egberts of Cohoes invented the power knitting machine in the United States and this was the year that the first horse-drawn street car appeared in New York City.

1833—On August 23, Great Britian abolished slavery in all her colonies.

#### 1833—WATERFORD ATTORNEYS AND DOCTORS

Waterford was a thriving place for lawyers and doctors nearly a century and a quarter ago. In 1833 our village had a total of ten attorneys and four physicians. Under other chapters we hope that we have managed to have named these professional people.

1836—On March 6, the Mexican General Santa Anna captured the Alamo and David Crockett was killed.

1839—Samuel Morse established in America the making of daguerreotype portraits from the method used in Paris. This was also the same year that Goodyear invented the vulcanizing of rubber in the United States.

1842—In this year the first Christmas tree in America was set up at Williamsburg, Virginia. On May 25, of this same year Stuart Perry invented the gasoline engine. From this invention followed the automobile which a church authority stated did more than any other thing, to break down "caste" in America.

1846—On May 13, of this year War was declared with Mexico, and on September 10, Howe patented the sewing machine.

1847—On July 1, the first United States adhesive postage stamp was put on sale in New York, making its use obligatory by July 1, 1856.

## CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

### 1850—WATERFORD CUSTOMS AND EVENTS

IN 1850 our people were still traveling to Schuylerville and Northumberland by canal packets. They went to Troy either by Waterford steamboats or after walking over the Union bridge to Lansingburg went to the city by horse-drawn omnibus. These vehicles did not enter Waterford until 1862.

In July of 1850 the churches and the houses of the village were draped in mourning for the death of President Zachary Taylor. He was a Mexican War Brigadier General and bore the sobriquet of "Old Rough and Ready."

During the summer, camp meetings were held at "Fitzgerald's Grove" and an extra string of cars (probably Rensselaer and Saratoga steam cars) were put on to accommodate the crowd.

Our diaryist of nearly a century ago also wrote "The streets are so dusty that we cannot have the windows open."

In 1851 she said that "a few ladies appeared on the village streets clad in the new Bloomer Costume; they create a sensation."

Walking then was considered a good and healthy custom and our writer says she went up the canal on a packet to the 3rd locks and then walked home to Waterford.<sup>1</sup> This hike would be close to two and one-half miles.

#### WATERFORD, A CENTURY AGO (1856)

In 1856 the Town of Waterford was cooled and beautiful by many trees. The moisture from the rain and the winter's snow was retained by these tree roots and slowly liberated by no less than eleven streams. Of these only two remain in 1956. Nature had spaced these eleven watersheds so finely that less than one quarter of a mile separated them.

The natural action of these streams helps support the statement

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<sup>1</sup> This data from *Diary*, Laura Cramer Ormsby, loaned by Katherine and Charles Cramer Ormsby.



made by the Waterford "Union" in 1837, namely, "No part of the Village has ever suffered flood damage." Trees prevent floods.

The erosion by the rivers was gentle in 1856. A large island split the northern branch of the Mohawk and was located a few yards southeast of the Eddy Valve creek. This Island and several others have been washed away partly due to tree cutting, since that year.

Five out of twelve of Waterford's more pretentious buildings were of the Post-Colonial type similar to the Masonic Temple. Three of these twelve buildings reflected England's customs in that they had reception "offices" for tradesmen. The estates were surrounded by high fences. Visitors in carriages were doubtless admitted through the wide gates to drive to the home itself.

The Hugh White home in the Northside and the Waterford Masonic Temple building still retain these English type reception offices. Both "offices" are now residences.

The Hon. John C. Cramer's place, about one mile from Waterford, fronted on the Hudson not far from the old McCoy place. This residence and others took advantage of the facilities afforded by the 1823-25 Champlain canal, which was about a half mile distant. Near the canal side the Hon. Cramer maintained a building where supplies arrived by canal boat. Another canal "depot" was kept by N. Clute near "Cold Spring Landing."

Close to the northern Waterford Town line was the second Waterford distillery owned by Morgan and Bullard.

On the "hill" then called West Waterford, was the home of J. C. House not far from "Grog" and Broad Streets. A "plank road" ran from the West Waterford "Northern" railroad past the House residence to the Village.

On leaving Waterford village and going to Dodgeville or the "Northside," one went past the several buildings once owned by Joe Fixture the predecessor of the 1956 Friedrichsohn Cooperage Company.

West of Cemetery Avenue (now Maple) was "Vinaegar" Hill. This became an extension of the Waterford Rural Cemetery which was bought in 1942. After being named "Vinaegar Hill" the place next was known as the "Dicky Davis Woods."

South of "Vinaegar Hill," one Z. Van Ness owned property

which probably gave its name to Van Ness street, while much farther to the south the Hon. John Fulton owned land which gave the name "Fulton" street.

About 900 yards north of present Fulton Street was the residence of J. Dodge which for a time probably resulted in Northside being known as Dodgeville.

Returning to Waterford Village we find the Leander Button Fire Engine works on the east side of lower Third Street and not on the west side of the street as some fodlks believe. The western building (still standing) was doubtless a Button storehouse and may have been where the Waterford Civil War Veterans drilled before going into battle.<sup>2</sup>

### WATERFORD'S GIANT ELM TREE

1860. A giant elm tree said by Waterfordians to be the "Father of them all," grew upon the farm of John Olive, north of the village.

A visiting European said this tree which measured 22 feet in circumference (about 7 feet in diameter) was at least 1800 years of age.

### MOUNT RAFINESQUE, STILL A PICNIC SPOT

In July of 1861 old Mount Rafinesque (Bald Mountain) was still a popular picnic spot. Waterford's J. E. Robinson proposed a horse express to go the 1300 foot mountain top while our J. P. Vosburg also offered conveyances. This is the peak introduced to Waterfordians by Samuel Rafinesque in 1833. They in turn honored him by naming the mountain Rafinesque which name official maps now carry.

### HOGS, STILL BOTHERING WATERFORD

In the early days the ancient and nearby village of Halfmoon, together with Waterford, were incessantly troubled by roaming hogs which gave at least one excuse for board fences within our village.

The *Waterford Sentinel* of July 1861 asked for abatement of the hog nuisance, saying that these porkers still run at large through the streets and "into one's yard, should the gate be left open."

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<sup>2</sup> Data partly from Map of Waterford 1856, survey of Clark and Newcomb C.E. by Ben. J. A. Clark, C.E., Philadelphia, Pa.

Our forebears were patient people since they had been trying to get the hogs to stay at home since the year 1793, or three score and eight years as our great Lincoln would have said.

### OVER THE COHOES FALLS

Bobby Leach, the noted dare-devil who descended the great Niagara Falls in 1911, chose the Cohoes Falls for trial trips in a steel barrel on April 15, and 22, in 1899. He was badly cut during both attempts and his only reward came from "passing the hat." The hat went the rounds twice, the gifts being so small. It was a Saturday afternoon and the raging Mohawk was in a torrent. Hundreds of Saturday specatators gathered on both sides of the shore from Waterford, Cohoes and Troy to watch the descent.

The 1340 pound cigar shaped steel barrel had wooden ends with an opening on the top, closed by a disc of steel.

Bobby removed his outer garments, and after shaking hands with two or three people climbed into the barrel clad only in a dark jersey and a fancy pair of trunks. After being strapped in position the steel cover was locked on. The jumping off place was on the Northside shore some 100 yards above the Falls and the time was 4:15 p.m. The barrel was pushed out into the stream but river currents caused it to cling to the shore. A descent here would be dangerous owing to heavy rocks and shallow water. Finally currents caught the barrel and it went over the falls fifteen feet from shore.

Then, caught in an eddy, it spun around and around for five minutes before going down the river.

Dragging a boat and waiting for the barrel were George Martin of Waterford and Archie Fuller from the Northside. They rescued the barrel and after unlocking the cover, out climbed Bobby, amid the shouts of the spectators. Leach had been badly tossed about and was bleeding from a forehead cut. The interior barrel straps had broken and a harness buckle had been driven into Leach's side inflicting a painful cut. With help he managed to climb to the top of the cliff to be treated by Dr. Gervaise of Cohoes. This was on April 15, 1899.

On April 22, 1899 Bobby tried it again. Again the straps broke when the barrel smashed to the bottom of the 70 foot falls. This



time Leach was badly cut and was confined to bed. Dr. Furbeck dressed Bobby's wounds taking four stitches in his forehead, patching a long cut on his knee and treating several severe abrasions of the body.

After this apprenticeship Bobby thought he could try the Niagara Falls which he did in 1911. After succeeding there he went to New Zealand where in 1926 he died—from falling on a banana peel.<sup>3</sup>

### THE SARATOGA FLIER

On its first run at 11:30 of the morning of Feb. 7, 1912, this was described by the *Waterford Times* as the "Invasion of the Steam Railroad by a Gasoline Motor Car." The 200 horse power gasoline engine was coupled with two 100 horse power electric motors which in turn furnished the power to drive, heat, light the car and operate the air compressors for the air brakes.

On its trial run to Whitehall on the Delaware & Hudson Company's line this railroad innovation attained a speed of a mile a minute.

Later on Feb. 12, 1912 this gasoline-electric car No. 2000, was put on the regular run between Troy and Saratoga and became known to the Waterfordians as the "Saratoga Flier" accommodating the many traveling patrons of the race tracks at Saratoga. The car body of steel was 68 feet long, 10½ feet wide and weighed 47½ tons. Gasoline tanks beneath the car carried enough fuel for a run of 200 miles. The motorman sat in a front compartment, just ahead of the motor apparatus. The whole car cost \$25,000.00 The car's driving unit was made by the General Electric Company and was demonstrated by W. R. Patterson. Passengers entered the car at the center on both sides. Towards the rear was the main seating compartment for 85 persons, together with a smoking room for 16 passengers and a baggage room.

Its first run was a gala day for the select passengers, the Mayor of Troy (Cornelius E. Burns), the officers of Troy's Chamber of Commerce, C. S. Sims of the D. & H. and select people from Cohoes, Waterford, Mechanicville and Saratoga where a roast turkey dinner at the Saratoga Club House was enjoyed and pictures taken.

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<sup>3</sup> Reprint: *Troy Record*, March 29, 1945, by Herbert Calkins.

The ride was described as having a pleasing steadiness, and a freedom from jolt or jar while stopping.

This gas-motor job was mainly an experiment since it was only continued until August 1915, later being run between Mechanicville and Delanson, and Saratoga and Schenectady. It was discontinued because it lacked both sufficient seating and baggage space.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> D. and H. Letter, dated Aug. 31, 1954.

## CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

### THE BARGE CANALS

IN 1903-1918 our Empire State constructed along the travel avenue of the Indians, one of the world's modern engineering works, the New York Barge Canals which cost 170 million dollars.

The Erie's main stem between Waterford and Buffalo on Lake Erie, is three hundred miles in length, but its total effective canal system actually measures 522 miles. It has 57 locks having an average lift of over twelve feet. It is the logical successor to DeWitt Clinton's dream, the famed 1825 Erie Canal, which cost nine million and paid off 43 million dollars before its tolls were abolished in 1882. The 1825 Erie Canal came when engineering was young, but its builders performed miracles. They defeated the spring rushes of wild rivers like the Mohawk and Genesee and great swamps such as the Montezuma by carrying the old Erie over these obstacles in heavy masonry aqueducts, one at Rochester being 848 feet in length.<sup>1</sup> But, in 1903 American engineering had "arrived" and was ready to make bold advances. Instead of the fearful, time consuming, two dozen old locks back of Cohoes, they made one great 169 foot climb<sup>2</sup> from the Hudson at Waterford, to the level of the Mohawk near Crescent in a distance of about 2 6/10 miles, the lift having five great locks. They are the greatest series of high lift locks in the world, and are wonderful affairs, electrically operated from dams which the canal required. We recall that Governor Sulzer after his avowed intention to sell to local citizens any such surplus electric barge canal power, was somehow impeached and removed from office, not on charges connected with his canal idea, however.

These modern engineers also used the neglected Mohawk in a most useful manner. They "canalized" it, from near Waterford to above Rome, New York. This was a bold step. They projected, on

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<sup>1</sup> *Travel*, Edward Hungerford, Sept. 1923, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Barge Canal*, Noble E. Whitford, 1931, p. 148.



paper, and it worked, a device to defeat the worst of the spring ice jams and freshets by an ingenious mechanical contrivance called a movable dam. Across the river are built a number of concrete abutments. Between these are hung a series of steel gates, which can be swung up or down. This provides a continuous dam. In the winter the gates are raised to permit the water, when present to pass through freely, while in the season of navigation the gates are changed and the water passes over them. When the water is high enough to flow over the dam, it also fills a separate passageway on the side, where a lock exists, and where the boat is raised to the level above the dam. These engineers eliminated the menace of Mohawk ice in a thorough manner. This was done by placing an extremely heavy guard gate at the point where Mohawk's ice would be liable to assault the two mile man-made cut from the Mohawk to the Hudson at Waterford. In the latter, as stated, are the world's greatest five locks each having a lift of about thirty-five feet.

These locks are of regular barge canal size, 300 feet in length, 45 feet wide and having a water depth of 12 feet across the sills of their gates.

Unfortunately the canal cannot utilize its predicated 12 foot depth since the canal is in several locations barely 10 feet deep.

But the most serious handicap is the existence of innumerable fixed bridges with a clearance of only 15½ feet. These are placed all the way from Waterford to Buffalo. If these bridges were movable, and the proper 12 foot water depth maintained, the Great Lakes craft of about 4000 ton capacity might use it for navigation from those lakes to New York City.

This low bridge feature was not an engineering fault, but that was the way that an important terminal city<sup>3</sup> and other transportation facilities are said to have wanted it. In this manner public utilities, presumably for the people, are hampered.

An unprecedented three-year educational program for and against, preceded the referendum in November 1903 to build the canal. The press was divided in the issue and while Buffalo and New York were for it, all the larger cities along the route were almost solidly against it. After a favorable vote by the legislature,

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<sup>3</sup> *Travel*, Edward Hungerford, Sept. 1923, p. 26.

Governor Odell signed the measure on April 7, 1903 and the bill became law. It happens that fully one-sixth of a million persons failed to vote either for or against the canal proposition.<sup>4</sup> The chief battle ground was New York City itself which gave a favorable three hundred thousand vote majority against the fifty thousand up state sections. But the total vote throughout the state was a favorable million votes.

Thus New York City did atonement nearly a century late for being decidedly against the first Erie canal which brought us the title of the "Empire State"<sup>5</sup> and made that city the commercial metropolis of the continent.<sup>6</sup>

We had plenty of "racket" at Waterford when the Erie Barge Canal was started here. First was the staccato sound from the down going steam drills. These confirmed a geologic story hinted years ago by older men; that this area was once the bottom of Lake Albany. Drillings showed moulding sand on top, then building sand, next gravel and finally cobbles, the top stuff being the residue of glacial days, with Snake Hill shale at the bottom. Other chug-chuggy noises came from the "dinky" locomotives which stayed a long time. They hauled away the "diggings" and brought forward tons of concrete for the new canal.

We should not forget that we really were given two 45 foot wide barge canals for the one hundred and one million dollars appropriated by Chapter 147 of the Laws of 1903, which cost finally grossed 170 million before these canals were finished. Added were the costs of the Cayuga-Seneca and Oswego Canals, and the terminals.

### THE LAKE CHAMPLAIN BARGE CANAL

This canal has the same capacity as the Erie. It connects New York and the upper waters of Lake Champlain. At the Canadian border boats may travel to Montreal, 453 miles from New York City. In North Waterford, at "*The Riffs*,"<sup>7</sup> a modern lock, connected with a movable dam, can be seen. At this same spot, two lively

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<sup>4</sup> *History of the Barge Canal*, Noble E. Whitford, 1921, p. 121.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>7</sup> Shoal water, 23/10 miles north of Broad Street, Waterford.

British army colonels tried to get these river obstructions removed some 163 years before. Strange that the American canal boys of the 1900's had to accomplish it.

Should you ask a river wise person what cargoes these canals carry, the reply would be "Standard Oil." His reply as concerns "Standard" would not be true, as other tankers ply the canal also. But in 1952, petroleum and its products ranked No. 1 on the list, being 77.43 per cent of all the cargoes carried. Grain has second place with a percentage of 10.173, products of agriculture as a whole being 10.693 p.c. Pulpwood ranks next with 2.47 p.c. Quite odd that molasses is fourth with 2.327 p.c. with scrap iron following with 1.79 p.c. Fertilizers and chemicals trail along almost evenly with 1.148 p.c. Altogether twenty-two different articles are carried, including sugar, and paper products. Among the grains 16,127,060 bushels was carried eastward. Wheat predominated with 356,406 tons. Corn, oats, rye and barley followed in the order named.<sup>8</sup>

We recall, too, seeing heavy shipments of armed artillery tanks coming through the Erie locks, from Schenectady, New York, during the Korean war.

What the two canals carried in 1952 may be put into four classes, (M.P.) Manufactured Products, (P.A.) Products of Agriculture, (P.F.) Products of the Forest and (P.G.) Products of the Ground. Manufactured Products (M.P.) such as Petroleum, molasses, scrap iron, fertilizers, chemicals, etc. having a total carriage of 86.50 percentage. A total of 3,374,000 tons went West (or north) and 389,294 tons Eastward.

The total record breaking tonnage was carried in 1951 and was 5,211,472 tons. The record of 1952 was somewhat lower being 4,487,858 tons, the Erie division being closed for 39 days, due to a leak near Rotterdam.<sup>9</sup>

The canal season extends for about eight months, April 7, (about) to include November and sometimes part of December. The Champlain division may open as late as May 1.

The maximum size of boats permitted to use the Barge canals is: Length 300 feet, beam 43½ feet, height out of water, 15 feet. The

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<sup>8</sup> Legislative Document, New York State 1953, No. 64 for 1952.

<sup>9</sup> Legislative Document, New York State, 1953, No. 64 for 1952, p. 177.



canal itself is known as the 1000 ton barge canal. A speed of 10 miles per hour is allowed in river and lake sections and 6 m.p.h. within the land lines.

A new type of canal boat equipped with semi-Diesel engines appeared in 1921. The boats measured 243 feet by 36 feet. They would carry 1,750 tons on an eleven-foot draft. The Standard Oil Company has its own power barges, which in one year had a total mileage of 60,326.<sup>10</sup>

Its power vessels are 260 feet long, with 40 foot beam and are 14 feet deep. One such vessel can carry 705,000 gallons of petroleum products all the way from New York to Duluth. With the Hudson river as now dredged, the S. S. *Levant Arrow* recently brought 2,500,000 gallons of gasoline from San Pedro, California, to Albany, N. Y. We are thus reminded that our canal still has great possibilities.<sup>11</sup> The canal is free, having no charges for shipping.

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<sup>10</sup> *Oil Power*, Standard Oil Co. Vol. VI, No. 8, Sept. 1923, p. 116.

<sup>11</sup> *History of the Barge Canal*, Noble E. Whitford, 1931, p. 391.

## CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

### THE HUDSON RIVER

THE HUDSON RIVER starts in Lake Tear of the Clouds, some 4320 feet high in the Adirondacks, near Mount Marcy. It has been called the most beautiful river in the world. Although at least 90 million years of age, it manages to mis-speak its age by subtle windings and turning, for such are the marks of a young river. Rivers as old as the Hudson, the Connecticut for example, usually look their age. They run in a straight wide valley. As we study this youngish looking north-south Hudson, we find it bending entirely to the east at the Stillwater bridge. At such great bends and at places where "riffs" occur as at North Waterford we are told that here the ancient river is "off" its true course. The answer to the Hudson's confusing young look, together with its twisting and turnings is given us by the geologists.

They say that this old river has passed through several periods of rejuvenation, first running over a mountainous peneplain and later meeting the earth's several uplifts by persistent re-cutting of its changing channels to reach the ocean's level. The Hudson has made at least three such journeys to the sea. The last channel was made after the glacial period, the river winding and cutting through the silt and debris of that time. So, the deceptive look was gained in that manner. But the Hudson has its old, first valley too, from 4 to 5 miles wide quotes, Dr. Stoller.<sup>1</sup> By his pages, also, we have been enabled to find the inner western rim of that ancient Hudson rock valley. Its old northeast-southwest course (about 30° east of north) was intersected on an angle by the later Mohawk River gorge, at Northside, a full 2000 feet below the present Cohoes Falls. This was also the location of the first Cohoes Falls. The site can best be seen from the south end of the Cohoes Harmony Mills by looking across the Mohawk to Northside. A dip in the top contour of the rock gorge indicates the spot.

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<sup>1</sup> *Glacial Geology of the Cohoes Quadrangle*, 1918, Nos. 215-216.

As the Hudson approaches the Highlands, it has a depth of 700 feet. It then continues 100 miles outward, culminating in a tremendous canyon on the bottom of the ocean.

At 50 miles beyond Sandy Hook, it plunges abruptly downward 1600 feet. Beyond this it reaches a depth of 4500 feet or more. Rachel Carson says these river mouth canyons, often a mile or more deep, are found on continental shelves throughout the world and their origin is still a mystery.

We Waterfordians admire the beauty of the river but have deplored its floods which are really man-made. Nature, in its wisdom, covered the hillsides with trees and vegetation the roots of which absorbed and then gently released the seasons' rain and snow.

But we cut down all the big trees, even piling them in big piles to burn, and placed river dams close to our cities—and have floods.

Then we erect more dams, partly as flood control measures.

A Waterford newspaper<sup>2</sup> of 120 years ago said, "Our village is just high enough above the two rivers (Hudson and Mohawk) current to protect it from the devastation of a freshet; no part of it has ever suffered water damage from flood." Man's destructive attack on the trees is easily shown. Just pour a pail of water on the old, inclined cellar door. It, of course, runs off instantly. This resembles the denuded hillsides of today. Next, cover the same surface with a piece of carpet and pour another pailful. The water is now absorbed and hardly any runs away. The carpet on the door represents the missing trees and the original vegetation and is a gentle hint from nature how we have erred. The trees were once so thick and the foliage so dense, that a "savage" might skulk from the Hudson to Lake Erie, without once exposing himself to the glare of the sun.<sup>3</sup> A single mature maple tree is capable of absorbing and transpiring into the air, a ton of water in 24 hours or ten gallons per hour. A fir is not so thirsty; its capacity is but a fifth of this. We regret that our elms are dying so fast. A large elm tree, on a hot summer day, may evaporate from its leaves as much as fifty barrels of water. This indicates the water absorbing capacity of our trees. Man breaks many laws with impunity; but for breaking nature's laws, the punishment

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<sup>2</sup> *Waterford Union*, Aug. 9, 1837.

<sup>3</sup> *History of Agriculture*, U. P. Hedrick.



is sure to come. One penalty for wasting our trees came in 1815 when many glass works were shut down for lack of wood.

Now, at last, we have begun to worry about the constant lowering of the "under the ground, water level" throughout the United States. As a water source, what does our Hudson now deliver? At Mechanicville the Hudson's average flow is 7,400 cubic feet per second. At that place, during the record breaking flood of March 28, 1913, its flow was 120,000 cubic feet per second.

The Mohawk river normally delivers 5,600 cubic feet per second. It has been estimated that the Hudson river was carrying over 93 million gallons of water per minute immediately below Peebles Island where it was burdened with the additional water from the third and fourth sprouts of the Mohawk River, during the 1913 flood.

One of the best local ground water sources is the former pre-glacial Mohawk River (now hidden) which flowed within 1500 feet of Schenectady and emptied into the Hudson River near Albany.

The bed of this changed river, which by the way first drained the glacial Great Lakes, is filled with gravel, sand and clay, the refuse of both the last ice sheet and sediments from Lake Albany, a glacial lake. These buried channels (one also flow through Colonie), supply in excess of 20 million gallons per day south and west of Scotia. The supply from the nearby Colonie buried channel is inferior supplying only 2 million gallons per day. To show how favorable the water supply from these ancient beds is, it may be stated that from wells drilled in bedrock, of whatever age, the maximum delivery is never better than 10 gallons of water per minute. Later figures show that for 65 years the recorded average waterflow of the Hudson as it passes Waterford, has been over  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million gallons per minute as it drains 4,500 square miles. The total drainage area of both the Mohawk and the Hudson rivers is 8,090 square miles. Their total water flow (Hudson and Mohawk Valleys) at the Troy dam for the past six years equals  $9\frac{3}{4}$  billion gallons per day.<sup>4</sup> Its purity is questionable, being given a "C" rating, i.e. not suitable for drinking or cooking,<sup>5</sup> below or south of the Mohawk "sprouts."

People now living, saw the Hudson river as it probably looked

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<sup>4</sup> U. S. Dept. of Interior Report. Water Resources Div. 1953.

<sup>5</sup> Water Pollution Control Board, 1954.

to both Henry Hudson's crew and the Indians, without the impediment of the Troy dam.

On June 12, 1893, a sixty foot section of that wooden dam was carried away, draining the entire river at Waterford. Two narrow channels were then able to carry all the water. One of these ran close to the Lansingburg shore. The other clung to the north shore of the fourth Mohawk "sprout" at Waterford's "Battery."

One reputable Waterford old timer<sup>6</sup> told the writer that he then crossed the Hudson's mud bottom to Lansingburg in hip boots.

The original outline of old Peebles Island could be seen. A long and broad peninsula extended well into the Hudson's bottom at the extreme eastern tip of the Island, near the Hammersley homestead. The dam breakage drained all the wells on Peebles Island, and residents pailed fine cold drinking water from numerous springs which flowed freely from the bed of the Mohawk's third branch.<sup>7</sup> Bubbling out with the water we found a Spanish silver coin of the 1700's.

The report<sup>8</sup> of this Troy dam accident stated "no serious injury was inflicted either on property below the dam—nor to that above it, by the emptying of the pond." This dam and sloop lock were originally finished in 1822-1825 and were started with a celebration. Sloops then began sailing to Waterford, the *Annals of Albany* stating that the Hudson was unnavigable before. The structure was 68 years of age when it broke and it had been located a thousand yards south of the present Federal dam which was opened on Aug. 3, 1915.

The old dam broke in June at just the right season. June, excepting October, sometimes is one of the months of minimum water-flow. April is the maximum month, the flow being nearly three times greater then. October<sup>9</sup> is the minimum flow month, then being less than half the average.

#### BREAKING UP, HUDSON AND MOHAWK RIVER ICE

A scene, once enjoyed by all, and now lost to the memory of most of us was the breaking up of the winter's ice. Here was a great show

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<sup>6</sup> Fayette Parker.

<sup>7</sup> Sprout No. 1 at Green Island, south end.

<sup>8</sup> Report of *New York State Engineer and Surveyor* for 1893, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> U. S. Dept. of the Interior Geological Survey, W. R. Branch. Sept. 30, 1952.

of nature, described by an early news writer as "a sublime spectacle, which impresses man with his littleness and insignificance." That editor did not err. Many times we have witnessed this remarkable scene. We then lived on an island surrounded by three giant streams annually swollen with furious water and heavy ice. To be awakened in early spring and hear the crashing and booming of ice amid the roaring of flood water were views and sounds that we shall never forget. We actually felt cheated when occasionally these rivers gave way to enormous pressure and something like ships passing in the night, went roaring past our island home carrying their icy burdens without being seen.

So awesome and attractive was this daylight display that our working men were then forgiven for "skipping" the morning's work until the river climax be past. Once we saw the dynamic Hudson carrying its winter's harvest of two foot thick ice start to move seaward at that exact moment when the two "sprouts" of the Mohawk with equally heavy ice burdens were smashing into the Hudson from the west.

Here was a battle of the Titans. The wider and more powerful Hudson was momentarily halted by this furious Mohawk attack. A mighty collision resulted with great sheets of thick ice being forced skyward. The Hudson's ice still smashing onward in great sheets was momentarily compelled to deflect shoreward toward Peebles Island. Here the unbroken ice plowed beneath the frozen ground as though that were butter. These ice sections were buried so deep by the Hudson's power that warm weather had well arrived before they were melted. To this day the mounds, or scars of that winter battle may still be seen. We lived to see embryo archaeologists start digging here for "mound builder" stuff.

Somehow we disliked our task of telling them of their mistake, remembering our own earlier but similar Indian hunting urges, in other places.

Once during a most severe winter the second Mohawk "sprout" was seemingly frozen to its base or bottom. Then with floods of rain from its western reaches it started to force its way into the Hudson. The latter in a defiant and frozen mood, refused to stir. With its outlet thus blocked the flood waters from the Mohawk's "Butter-



milk" or the "Little Cohoes Falls," rose with astonishing speed. This wall of water was heightened because it was flowing atop the Mohawk ice which in places was frozen to the bottom. Soon it topped the narrow Delaware & Hudson embankment, water flowing between the tracks. Under such tremendous pressure the whole earthen railway wall on Van Schaick island would shortly be washed away. Just now, however, old man Hudson relented, started to move, and the danger was over. Some of the heavy mass of Mohawk ice frozen or stuck to the bottom, remained to be melted by the warm sun of the spring.

On this same Mohawk shore we frequently snared the firewood for our island home. With the spear of a long "pike" pole thrust into a choice piece of timber we coaxed it shoreward amid the grinding cakes of ice. This was always a "tug of war" for the thrusting ice had iceberg force.

One sad day a giant two foot square log came within reach and was fastened to the pike pole with one mighty swipe. But, between the log and the boy, a giant cake of ice dashed in. Only a moment to decide now, to hang on and be pulled into the river or let go our finest pike pole, with its choice catch. Discretion won and away went the pole. With it went our prestige. Among the men the pike pole was a tool that then ranked as high as a piece of home furniture.

The evacuation of Mohawk ice frequently lasted for a day or more. When finely chopped ice mixed with corn stalks finally began to appear, the older river men would confide to us "that the ice from the Schoharie creek was passing by."

The Mohawk river draining 3456 square miles is a boisterous stream. During the flood of October 1955 its water delivery actually approached within twenty per cent of the Hudson's delivery (drainage 4050 square miles) during the great flood of 1913. The latter at Mechanicville was delivering 120,000 cu. ft. per second on March 28, 1913. The Mohawk which usually delivers 5,600 cu. ft. per second was pouring away 100,000 cu. ft. per second in the flood days of October 1955 when the entire Mohawk drainage area was subjected to heavy rains.

More serious however was the manner in which the top soil of the Mohawk valley farms was being swept away and lost. The in-

stantaneous daily discharge of the Mohawk's sediment equalled 466,000 tons per day on October 17, 1955.<sup>10</sup>

This great soil loss strongly supports the plan of wise farmers and Grange members in terracing the hill portions of their farms to cut down this heavy and expensive waste.

### MOUNT RAFINESQUE (BALD MOUNTAIN)

Across the Hudson and looking down upon us with the morning sun is Lansingburg's old "Bald" Mountain or Rafinesque.

It deserves special mention here because Waterfordians gave it the name Mount Rafinesque which has since appeared on New York State's topographical maps, thus honoring one of the most eminent of America's earliest scientists, Constantine Samuel Rafinesque.

Rafinesque while not equal to the great Archimedes was very versatile. Some 941 books and manuscripts are credited to his name. Botany, Meteorology, Mineralogy, History, Geology, and dozens of other subjects flowed easily from his pen after he walked from place to place in the early 1800's.

This unusual man was a close friend of Professor Amos Eaton of Troy's Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where he lectured several times.

Rafinesque was born in a suburb of Constantinople and was of Franco-German blood and of Turko-Grecian nativity.

He visited Waterford on August 7, 1833 and lectured before our "Lyceum Club." Our people were so delighted with him, and his story of this 1300 foot mountain of Normanskill shale that they gave his name to that eminence. Waterfordians had given but scant notice to this "Bald Mountain" before Rafinesque arrived. But in 1833 learning was beginning to surge forward. Quite apart from being a trained American scientist, this learned man had added another chapter to the knowledge of our citizenry. Thereafter climbing that mountain became a regular Waterford pastime and an old Waterford newspaper tells of looking for a light from the camp of the Button family who stayed atop Rafinesque one night.

Rafinesque was no ordinary man. He had a well defined opinion

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<sup>10</sup> Water Resources Division Letter, United State Dept. of the Interior, Geological Survey, Feb. 8, 1956.

of evolution antedating Darwin. He had ideas of the modern germ theory of disease and was a pioneer in American archeology, besides being a teacher in modern languages.

In natural science Rafinesque clung to the natural classification, opposing the old Linnaean system. He became an American citizen in those early days when American science was young in most of its fields.

He made many firm friends in America but it was his fate to die alone and unfriended. He is buried in Philadelphia.<sup>11</sup>

Mount Rafinesque was a favorite watching point for the Tories of the Revolution, who with the British agents worked actively among the settlers on that side of the Hudson. The summit gave a wide view of the surrounding country and all movements in the valley of the Hudson for many miles to the North and South lay open to their observation.

Close to a perpendicular rock on the west side of the mountain a young Continental soldier was murdered. He was accused of being a British spy, whereas later events proved he was but on his way to Lansingburg to visit his family. This atrocity was repeated in the case of Abner Roberts, an officer of the Continental army. Both were members of the old Gilead Church group at Center Brunswick and were about to visit their families who had fled to Lansingburg when Schuyler retreated from Fort Edward during Burgoyne's invasion. Roberts was killed by a band of Tories.<sup>12</sup>

Not far south of Rafinesque is old Diamond Rock, a pointed mass of calcereous sandstone of the Cambrian period.<sup>13</sup> This spot, like Rafinesque gives a commanding view of the Hudson Valley. Diamond Rock is the legendary local rock of the Mahican Indians. Here the legend goes, an Indian maiden waited long and watched for her absent lover.

Feeling that he would never return she wept and her tears of sorrow were transformed into "diamonds" as they fell to the ground. These crystals of legendary grief are still found at Diamond Rock.

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<sup>11</sup> *Rafinesque*, T. J. Fitzgerald.

<sup>12</sup> *Gilead Church History*, J. N. Barnett, 1881. (Loan of Mrs. Elsie Roberts.)

<sup>13</sup> *Geology of Capital District*, Ruedemann.



## CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

### WATERFORD'S FIRES, FLOODS, AND STORMS

ON SUNDAY, July 11, 1841 Waterford had its baptism by fire, the greatest calamity in its history. The fire started at 4 p.m. in the alley, immediately in the rear of what in 1955, is the Episcopal Church. Notwithstanding the story<sup>1</sup> printed in Troy in 1951, that it started from a firecracker, this was not revealed by the committee, of venerable men<sup>2</sup> making the report on the fire shortly after it occurred.

Adjacent to the barn where the blaze started, was the candle and soap works, but unless Sunday work was in progress, it should not have commenced there.

The citizens turned out "en masse" at the start and brought the village fire engine to bear upon the flames with little effect, even with those helping from Lansingburg, Cohoes, Troy and "West" Troy. Their help, however, probably prevented the destruction of the other parts of the village. In less than one hour after the alarm was sounded, more than forty buildings were all blazing at once. The confusion and terror was exceptional. While some were helping the children and aged people to places of safety, their own buildings were being consumed. Furniture and goods taken from burning homes were overtaken by the spreading flames and burned in the streets. At sunset the fire ceased.

It had burned from the alley near the town hall, clear over to First Street, including all the stores and buildings on the north side of Broad Street. By special efforts of the firemen and citizens, the General Stewart home (occupied by John Stewart) was saved. The burned area continued down First Street to Middle. The buildings on Middle Street from Fourth Street alley to First Street were

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<sup>1</sup> *Troy Record*, May 30, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> John Knickerbacker, John Cramer, John House, John Stewart, George W. Eddy, H. B. Doe, and Elisha Mors.

also burned. One hundred and twenty-eight buildings, stores and storehouses and dwellings were destroyed, which included 17 brick buildings, 13 of which were two and three stories high.

Among those burned was the Mansion House (formerly Demarest's) on Broad Street, the Saratoga County Bank, the Episcopal wooden church, (perhaps this was the former Methodist Meeting House). Another old account<sup>3</sup> says that the belfry and roof of a public school building on First Street were damaged. This must have been old Classic Hall.

The loss was so severe that it took years for the village to regain its former position. Years of productive industry and improvement disappeared with the fire and the loss was but partly covered by insurance. Many were ruined by the fire and were without any means of subsistence. These depended upon the contributions secured by the 1841 Trustees Committee, whose report forms part of this account.

### WATERFORD'S GREATEST FLOOD

Friday, March 28, 1913 brought Waterford its greatest scare. The raging Hudson and Mohawk rivers, meeting together at our "Battery" in the most stupendous flood of the Hudson Valley sent the water to unprecedented heights. The year 1857 first held the record, but this 1913 inundation exceeded it by some twenty feet.

A three-day deluge of rain throughout the whole state area poured down the frozen but snowless hills to the north and west, which changed the Hudson and Mohawk into raging torrents.

These roared seaward in the Hudson with a speed of from 20 to 25 miles an hour, carrying debris of all kinds upon the ninety-three million gallons of water that they were estimated to have been delivering each minute of that fateful day.

In a row boat we carried food to marooned people, taking out those on the lower floors and others who wished to leave their homes. Along the Battery and lower First Street the water in these homes was several feet deep. Some of the windows raised with the water and as we rowed by we were pained to see nice pianos half submerged, with sofa pillows and other loose articles floating through

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<sup>3</sup> Report copied by Edward A. Wilkins.

the windows into the stream. One panicky woman, far from being a lightweight, took a flying jump into our boat, almost ending the rescue work suddenly. A tom cat, upon a garage roof, yowled an S.O.S. for help. As our boat grew near he spit and resisted liberation so mightily, we let the flood have him. Upper Third and Fourth Streets were streaming lakes with bungalows and garages looking like black ducks upon the waters. The water kept rising steadily, bringing a warning from our Fire Chief Conroy. We were all to take to the hills—should the Town Hall bell toll and give the signal. Such a token would indicate that the great Spier Falls dam had burst, supposedly pouring a still greater avalanche of water upon us. At about 11:00 in the morning of March 28, 1913, the dreaded warning bell tolled, and panic seized our village. Then on upper porches, we saw people praying for help, and we in the boats really felt that death was fast approaching. We pondered how our row boat and its occupant would act when suddenly squeezed between two floating houses. We had pledged to move a near dying man should the warning bell sound. It was truly frightful to put this sufferer, clad only in pajamas in the bottom of a row boat, he having but scant wind blown covering against the chill March air. Other rescuers, Charles Mead and Philip Hewitt,<sup>4</sup> heard a warning creak as they rowed past the Presbyterian Church. Hardly a moment was to pass before they saw the south end of the structure crash down upon the house of Ephrium Sherman.

At the sound of the warning bell some villagers walked nearly waist deep in water to reach the safe haven of the hills. Some of the older folk, not rescued in the boats, were carried away in wagons. We saw still others carrying away quite useless articles, probably leaving their valuables behind them. Down the river, Thomas Meeker's ice house went seaward, while in the village and its environs, three people died as a result of the flood, including the man I had helped rescue.

But, Spier Falls water did not come. The phone message was a "fake."

During this dreadful period Troy was without lights and the perpetual *Troy Record* was dwarfed to a small 12 x 21 inch sheet,

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<sup>4</sup> *Troy Record*, March 31, 1913.





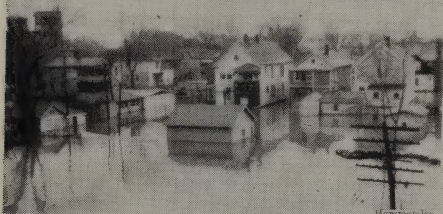
"The Battery" FRONT ST. 1913

Hammersley



REAR OF FOURTH ST. 1913

Hammersley



UPPER FOURTH - 1913

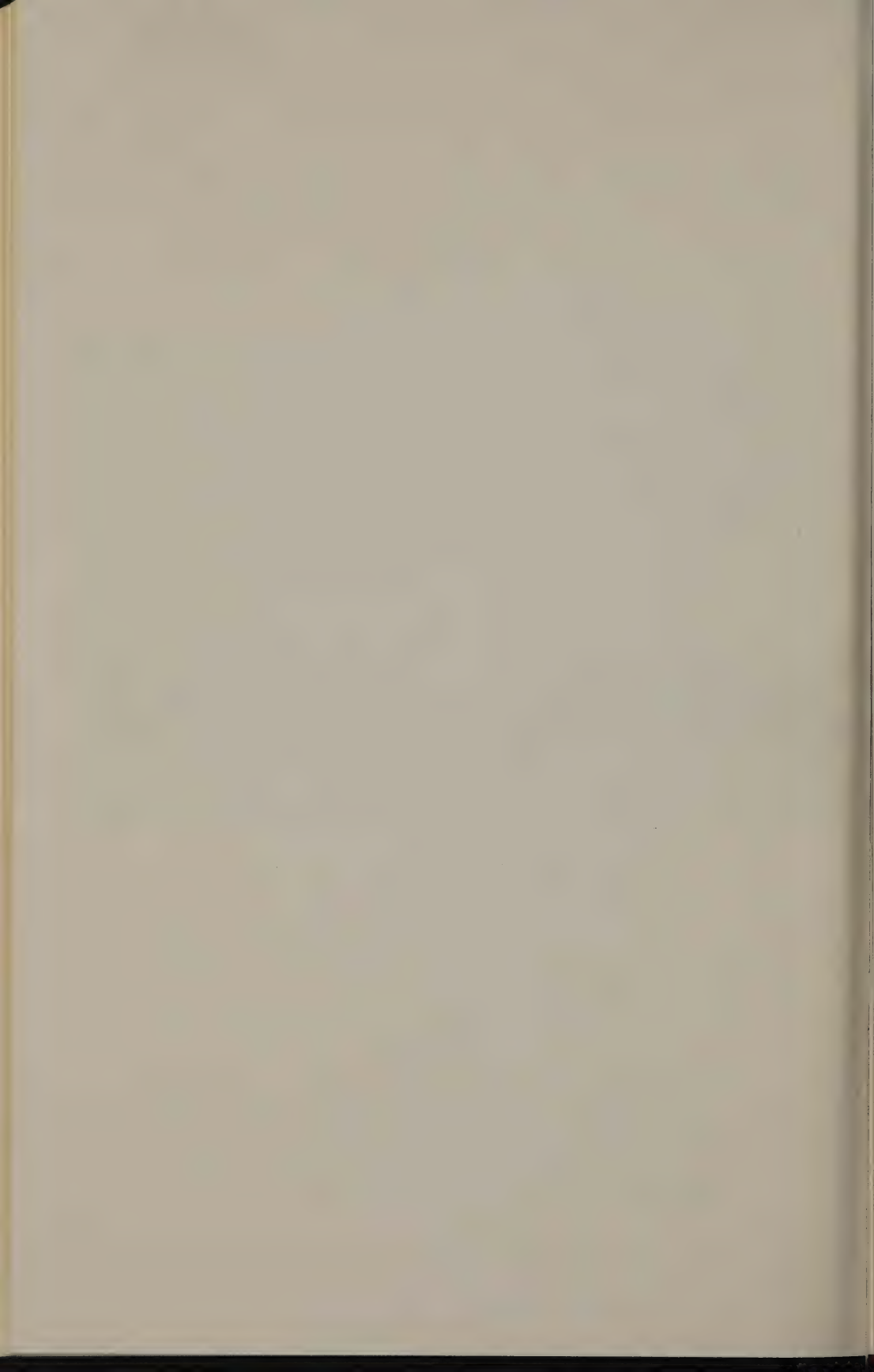
Hammersley



UPPER THIRD ST. 1913

Hammersley

WATERFORD'S GREAT FLOOD, March 28, 1913



printed by Foster in Cohoes. The National Guard troops of Companies A, C, and D were sworn into service, and commandeered every last rowboat for rescue work.

The heartless person who phoned in the lie about Spier Falls was not discovered. The waters began receding on March 29, and the damage was tremendous. The ground floors of most village homes, with pianos, carpets and furniture, lay beneath several inches of thick mud.

Troy's newspapers<sup>5</sup> coming back to life, described our late ordeal as "Waterford's Worst Scare in History" as they likened our village to the terrible memories of Johnstown and Galveston.

### THE TOWN HALL FIRE 1914

Waterford's first Town Hall, Broad Street's dominating brick structure, was burned early on the morning of January 6, 1914.

It was erected in 1873 and being substantially built, made a stubborn fire. The belfry opening acted as a chimney and drew the flames the entire length of the building making the fire impossible to extinguish.

Soon were blazing the four faces and hands of the old clock, which sad to say, had rarely been in agreement on the time question. As a result we Waterfordians had for years depended upon the hourly tidings sent out by the clock's bell.

Many times these clanging tones had told us of ominous town fires and had in older days always helped us celebrate George Washington's birthday by ringing some twenty minutes at midday.

It final call came at five in the morning just as the Kreiger baker boys were going on duty. The faithful fifty year old Button Steamer was soon pouring on water on the fire, helped by the Cohoes "Murphy" and the Lansingburg "Twining." These three groups expertly fought the flames and confined them to the old Hall itself, there being no wind at the time.

A news photo shows the old Knickerbocker (Button) Steamer and its firemen at the fire. These were Henry Gaunt, Chief Conroy, Captain Charles Brady, Assistant Captain Pierce Hays, Fred Parker, Albert Batt, Patrick Curtin, and Oscar Baker. Only the last two

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<sup>5</sup> *Troy Record*, March 29, 30, 31, 1913.



firemen are alive in 1956. Patrick Curtin lives in Waterford and Oscar Baker resides in Florida.

It was a cold winter morning and the whirling sprays of water were changed into glistening strings and strips of ice almost as they left the firemen's hose. It lacked being considered beautiful only because of the destruction. This fire together with that of 1841 entirely wiped out Waterford's official record of the past, for in 1953 not a single item of historic interest could be found inside the successor building. The old tower bell although being upset and falling many feet, was not damaged and in 1956 still serves in the new Town Hall.

### WATERFORD FLOOD OF 1949

The year of 1948 was a year of weather extremes. Its winter brought a maximum amount of snow and cold. The summer's heat went to 100 degrees, while as the year ended, the Hudson River rose to twenty-two feet above normal, this deluge coming on January 1, 1949.

Torrential rains in six northeastern states caused floods and damage running into the millions.

Many Waterford families again left their homes in a mass evacuation, a reminder of the record flood of 1913.

The unseasonable rain, falling continuously for forty-eight hours coated the trees with ice and finally moved the ice from the rivers, causing ice jams in some areas.

This was called a "flash" flood and it put an end to the historic Schaghticoke "Witenagemot" Oak planted in a joint Indian white man ceremony in 1676.

This 273 year old Council tree grew not far from the raging Hoosick River and its roots so long at home in the ground of the Mahican's "Vale of Peace," were torn out by the flood.

### HURRICANE WIND STORMS, NOV. 24-26, 1950

Waterford and this entire area were visited Nov. 24-26 with near hurricane winds which reached 85 miles per hour. The National Board of Fire Underwriters declared it to be the most costly wind-storm to strike the United States<sup>6</sup> the cost reaching \$2,000,000.00.

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<sup>6</sup> *Times Record*, Jan. 30, 1951.

Six local persons were killed and more than a score injured. Thousands were without heat, light or telephones and schools were closed. Waterford's School No. 1 had windows broken and the roof damaged. Thousands of men in this area worked night and day clearing the streets and highways and restoring public utilities, including 57,000 telephones.

In Waterford, upper Third Street was entirely blocked by a huge elm tree which lay across the highway. On Hudson street another great tree fell upon Mrs. Edward Moulton's auto and came to rest upon a house. Joe Douglas's bungalow near St. Mary's was also a resting place for a large tree.

Scores and scores of other homes, and autos were either crushed or damaged by falling trees in this local zone.

On the Hudson river with the water 5 foot above normal, a gasoline barge laden with high octane fuel broke away from its moorings and came to rest atop the Federal dam at Bond street. For a time this was regarded as a serious safety hazard but the gasoline was finally pumped from the craft and the peril eliminated.

This storm struck the entire northeast section of the country and 200 persons lost their lives.

Many Waterfordians, like the author, were without heat or light for a period of five days. Old fashioned lamps again returned to serve us. With all our unusual refinements of living, nature often steps in to show us how puny and really dependent we are.

Two flocks of night flying wild geese went southward at ten o'clock<sup>7</sup> and honking so loudly as to rouse the dogs, seemed to cast derision upon us unhappy and wind swept humans on the ground below.

### A TERRIFIC AND FATAL EXPLOSION

On December 21, 1939 several Cohoes schoolboys were hiking in the Waterford area of the Erie Barge Canal near Lock No. 6 west of Waterford.

A contractor had been working in the vicinity and had stored away in an appropriate manner some 500 pounds of forty per cent dynamite in a shack enveloped with earth.

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<sup>7</sup> *Times Record*, Nov. 28, 1950.

No one saw the accident and the cause may never be known, but suddenly there occurred a terrific explosion as the whole mass of dynamite went off in one terrible blast.

The five boys, Roger Murray, Russell Prescott, Edward B. Fogarth, Arthur Perras and Frederick B. Deeb were instantly killed. The blast was so great that identification of the bodies was a difficult task.

The explosion made a hole in the earth twelve feet deep and fifty foot in diameter.



## CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN

### WORLD WAR I

WORLD WAR I was fought by our allies some two years and eight months before the United States entered it on April 6, 1917, to "Make the World safe for Democracy." The origin of the war was wrapped up in the intricate relations existing between the European nations and Germany's desire to fight.

The direct entry of the United States into the conflict followed unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany whereby American lives were lost, particularly on the liner *Lusitania*. The United States was astonishingly unprepared for this war. Our Army was small and poorly supplied and the Navy was not fully manned. The Army had less than a dozen planes and the railroads were so under equipped that the government under William McAdoo took them over on December 27, 1917. No laws existed for the development of the Army or Navy and this brought about the Selective Military Conscription Bill which was passed on May 18, 1917. This bill was based upon taking two-thirds of one per cent of the Town's population.<sup>1</sup> By July 20, of 1917, the names of 500 Waterfordians had been enrolled for the Federal draft.<sup>2</sup> These 500 names exceeded the draft requirements. the excess doubtless allowing for those to be exempted or rejected later. More than half of these people served in the armed forces.

Waterford's War Service Flag was flown for the first time on October 29, 1917 in front of our Town Hall, with Mrs. Jay Willard Clark heading the flag committee. At its dedication the townspeople led by the Town Board welcomed Governor Whitman who made the principal speech. Chairman Charles H. Carter presided and announced that \$340,850.00 had been raised for the Third Liberty Loan and that Waterford had sent three times the required number of men to the war.

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<sup>1</sup> *Troy Record*, June 6, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> *Troy Record*, July 20, 1917.

The Service Flag then contained 186 stars and one red star for Ralph Spinks one of the first Waterfordians to die in World War I. Two nurses were on Waterford's roll. This was the advance guard of a great Woman's Army Corps that played such an important part in later wars.

John F. Brown of South Street was the first Waterfordian accepted by the Saratoga County Exemption Board. Later on April 24, 1918 he was recommended for a commission as Second Lieutenant.

Disloyal elements within the United States caused the guarding of the new Barge Canal by the Depot Battalion of the National Guard.

On November 15, 1917 twenty-one Sub-Chasers which had been built at Clayton on the St. Lawrence passed through the Barge Canal at Waterford on their way to the war.

Our first effort in the war was devoted to the raising and shipment of food, particularly for our allies. The submarine menace was taking a heavy toll of our shipping and food was getting scarce. Parts of the western plains which had never before been disturbed by the plow were planted for wheat.

The top surface of this land had been held together since the days of the buffalo by a particular type of vegetation. Now uncovered and hurled by the wind its light soil produced our "dust bowls" which in 1950 still remain to haunt us.

In our own locality our wheat flour was "doctored" by other flour or stuff, while rice was added to our mashed potatoes to "stretch" them. Sugar was scarce and high in price and our bodies were always hungry for more sweets. Some of us satisfied this longing by eating raisins. Coal was very scarce and some churches met in smaller rooms while other meetings were restricted for lack of warmth. Three thousand local workers were idle on January 17, 1918 when factories were shut down for five days due to a coal shortage.

Over the years Germany had developed a monopoly on the dye situation. While the United States was developing its own methods our best dyed American clothing was prone to turn a peculiar green, long before being worn out. Out of this tribulation our country developed its own super chemical knowledge.

By November 2, 1917 Russia who had been fighting the Central Powers became war weary and called for help. Six days later Russia's Kerensky was tossed out and Lenin was made the Bolshevik Premier. By March 3, 1918 Russia made peace with Germany and her allies.

In France our fighting men bore the title of "Doughboys" and our army staff was puzzled about March 25 by the German's "Mystery" cannon which threw shells into Paris from a distance of seventy-five miles. At first Paris's air defense circle was blamed for letting a plane slip by and drop its bombs on that city, since no cannon had ever before fired such a long distance. Fragments of the shells were finally put together which revealed that they were fired from a cannon. The Watervliet Arsenal to solve the matter then made five experimental guns from the deductions of our artillery staff. Years later we found the U. S. artillery "guess" was exactly correct, and that we had discovered the German secret, of that Paris gun. The writer engineered these five cannon through the Watervliet Arsenal.

By September 30, 1918 Bulgaria deserted Germany but Washington expected the war to last for another year. This was followed by a German peace feeler on October 7, and two other peace offers on October 22, and 30.

The replies of the United States to these notes were identical. Germany must evacuate all occupied territory before such notes would be considered.

A puzzling mix up of protocol then involved the American Naval Force in Europe whereby Germany was reported to have surrendered at 12:15 (noon) of November 7, 1918. The news reached the United States through the United Press. Joy bells were rung and whistles sounded the premature tidings of peace.

On November 9, Kaiser Wilhelm abdicated his throne and on November 11, 1918 Germany unconditionally surrendered and signed the Armistice.

Then followed the greatest, the noisiest, and the happiest parade in our memory which went up and down the streets of Troy.

We Arsenal men, led by our Commandant Colonel Charles G. Mettler marched through Watervliet and over the Congress Street Bridge to Troy where we were joined by Major Burns and the



marching cohorts of that city. This was soon after the bells rang at three o'clock in the afternoon of November 11, which this time gave the truthful tidings of the ending of that first World conflict.

Out of this war developed Waterford Post Brady No. 235 of the "American Legion" and its Auxiliary which are also mentioned elsewhere.

## CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

### WORLD WAR II

ALL WATERFORDIANS were shocked on that Sunday afternoon of December 7, 1941 to hear of Japan's perfidy and the tragedy of Pearl Harbor.

The United States accordingly voted on December 8, to declare war on Japan, the Senate voting 82 - 0 in favor of it and the House 388 - 1, Representative Jeanette Rankin of Montana casting the only negative vote.

Germany and Italy declared war on the United States on December 11, 1941 and we accepted the challenge within a few hours. After the Japan declaration of war, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared "The United States will triumph, so help us God." Thus Japan, Germany and their allies had plunged the United States into its second world conflict in twenty-four years. Then followed the North African campaign, and the invasion of France which had a beachhead 60 miles long and 10 miles deep, the invasion led by Supreme Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The Ardennes Bulge was a violent attack by fifteen German Divisions on December 16, 1944 which spoiled a "Merry Christmas" for many of us.

German atrocity at the "Bulge" cut down and destroyed many captured Americans with machine gun fire and left them dead upon the field. It gave solace to some to hear the report that the Germans there lost 220,000 in dead and prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

Then followed the Rhine Crossing on March 7, 1945 while all this time the Americans and the Royal Air Force has been mercilessly pounding the enemy lines, factories, the oil fields and the German allies' strategic cities.

Waterford responded to the call of war by having a defense mass meeting arranged by Mayor John F. Walsh and Supervisor Angus

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<sup>1</sup> *The New York World-Telegram's* "World Almanac," 1956, p. 145

Garrett. Fire Chief Joseph Hartnett outlined the defense plans for Waterford.<sup>2</sup>

Realizing the possibility of aircraft raids, "blackouts" were ordered with Wardens appointed for both Waterford and Northside. It was a rather impressive sight to stand high on the Northside hills and see the lights gradually fade out in the Hudson Valley below, as the sirens wailed. Only one light high up on Lansingburg's Mount Rafinesque failed to go out. We suppose the sound of the siren's call did not reach that remote spot.

Waterford for its part reported this blackout test as a complete success.<sup>3</sup> When fully organized Waterford's Civil Defense Board was headed by James A. Galvin as Chairman.

This second World War was marked by sugar, gasoline, and rubber shortages while almost all the Town's populace saved fat drippings and had paper drives to conserve that commodity. Even our tin cans were saved and collected so that their minute tin covering might be used for the war effort.

Sugar rationing started in Waterford on May 5, 1942. In three days 5276 ration books had been issued. The faculty of School No. 1 and School No. 2 acted as registrars both for sugar and for gasoline. Gasoline rationing started in Waterford on May 11, 1942.

The great magnitude of our war task was fully realized when we found that nearly every Waterford family had either men or women in the service.

At the last count close to 1200 people had responded to our country's war call. It was impossible to repeat the custom of War I and place the names of our service men and women on a single war flag. Instead both Waterford and the Northside had their large Honor Rolls. The Lion's Club maintained on the Town Hall the list of Waterfordians who served, while Northside had an equally large roll at the front of School No. 2.

Our local factories were all busy on war orders and the Matton Shipyards on the Hudson were turning out large Subchasers.

The Red Cross ever true to its mission, performed a heavy task

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<sup>2</sup> *The Troy Record*, December 11, 1941.

<sup>3</sup> *Troy Record*, June 29, 1942.



during the conflict and maintained motor conveyances for Civil Defense needs.

On May 3, 1945 a group of highly decorated American combat veterans visited the plants of the local National Auto Fibres Corporation.

On the same date the newspapers rumored that the end of the war was near and that the madman Hitler had committed suicide. Shortly after this the Germans surrendered in both Austria and Slovakia.

On May 6, 1945 "VICTORY" was proclaimed by both Truman and Churchill, the war guns to become silent at 8:41 a.m. at which time Germany had unconditionally surrendered.

"Victory in Europe" rites were conducted at the Grace Episcopal Church and similar solemn thanksgiving services held at the Waterford Methodist Church on May 7, 1945.

The Japanese war in the Pacific was still in progress with the world's first atom bomb to be dropped upon the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6, and 9, 1945.

Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945 and this became our V. J. Day. This marked the end of the most dreadful and wasteful war in history.

The end of the war in Japan was marked by a spontaneous and happy parade of Waterford people led by the smart and high stepping marchers of the Drum Corps sponsored by St. Mary's Church.

The late President Roosevelt predicted on December 8, 1941 that our country with God's help would win this World War. We did help win that war but winning the peace is still elusive even in 1956. The new evil of "Communism" has arisen to plague the world and spotty cold wars now take the place of the hot wars. The cold wars transform into hot conflicts like Korea and have brought a "round the world mortgage" on America's future.

There is, however, a great and supreme power that can bring us that elusive peace. We hope that some day our nation will accept the challenge and prove our belief.

## 1956 BRINGS ANOTHER BRIDGE AND AN ACCIDENT

The sixth street bridge at West Waterford which passes over the upper branch of the Delaware and Hudson tracks became outmoded.

It interfered with modern automobile traffic and had caused several accidents. It was narrow and became a bottleneck in the Prospect Hill road which curved as it passed over the tracks below. In very early days before the railroad cut a gulley through this hill-side, it was known as the road to Ballston.

Both of Waterford's prevailing political parties claim credit for inaugurating this new bridge venture but the bridge itself is a sufficient improvement and a credit for all who worked for it. Its cost was divided between Saratoga County, the Delaware and Hudson Company and the Town of Waterford.

On June 12, 1956 the bridge which was about complete was to carry a new 12 inch water main to be installed by a contractor. This pipe carried the water for the village of Waterford and was supposedly finished except for the insulation against the winter's frost.

About 11:20 in the evening of June 12, Fred Roberts of the Water Works noticed an unusual drop in water pressure as his pumps were working. He immediately notified the Water Works officials who with one accord and one suspicion started for the new bridge. Too late! The contractor's new 12 inch water main had settled but one-half inch but this was sufficient to dislodge some fifty-six hundred cubic feet of earth.

This soupy mixture flowed upon the northbound track of the oncoming seven car Rouses Point train which plowed into the debris at 11:40 p.m.

The train running along merrily to the north was suddenly stopped by the mess which covered the locomotive wheels together with those of two of its coaches.

The latter were derailed. It might have been a serious accident but fortunately only one injury occurred. Edward M. Foley of Mechanicville was hurled forward by the sudden impact and was cut about the head and face.

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## WATERFORD'S CIVIC DETAILS

### (Village and Town)

#### VILLAGE OF WATERFORD

*Location*—Considering that the Village forms part of the Township of Waterford, both Village and Town may be said to lie at the extreme southeastern corner of Saratoga County.

*Latitude*—42 degrees 47' 20". (Taken at junction of Routes 4 and 32).<sup>1</sup>

*Longitude*—73 degrees 40' 40". (Taken at junction of Routes 4 and 32).<sup>1a</sup>

*Sea Level*—35 feet above mean sea level (Corner of Broad and Second Streets.<sup>1a</sup> 200 feet at Prospect Hill. (Maximum). 100-200 feet at Northside. (Maximum).

*River Situation*—The southeastern corner of both Village and Town lies at the confluence of the Hudson River at its junction with the northern branch of the Mohawk delta.

*First Settlers*—Were Traders and Trappers. 1623-1630.<sup>2</sup>

*Village Surveyed*—By Flores Banker, 1783-1793-1803 and 1805 (See Village Map herewith).

*Village Land Purchased*—1784.

*Village Incorporated*—March 25, 1794.<sup>3</sup> Waterford Village is the oldest Incorporated Village in New York State.

*Extent*—The Village covers about 135 acres. The Town covers about (7) square miles.

*Surface*—Flats of Town along Mechanicville Road are alluvial loam.

Bed rock of Village is Snake Hill Shale.

Prospect Hill, Sandy loam and Clay. (Was bottom of glacial lake).

Northside, South end near Mohawk, is Snake Hill Shale, North of Vanderwerken Avenue, is Normanskill Shale. (Note) Top surface of both these shales, has turned to clay by weathering.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter, U. S. Dept. of Interior, dated Feb. 3, 1956.

<sup>1a</sup> Letter, U. S. Dept. of Interior, dated Feb. 3, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Saratoga County*, 1609-1878, Sylvester, 1878, Pg. 324.

<sup>3</sup> Chapter 36, Laws of New York 1794.

*Village Corporation Boundaries*—Begins in center of Hudson River (opposite the middle of north branch of Mohawk River) thence northerly through center of the Hudson to a brook (once Kerwin's) which enters the Hudson River about 500 feet north of State Street, thence along this brook under the tracks of the Troy Division of the D. & H. H. R. and thence through an arch or culvert of the Albany & Vermont R. R. (Leased to D. & H.). Then along northern and westerly bounds of latter railroad, in a southwesterly direction to center of (1825) Champlain canal. Thence 54 degrees west, in a direct line to northwesterly corner of the lands formerly owned by Keoughnan and Gregg. Thence through a creek which enters the 1915 Barge Canal near Lock No. 3. Thence (nearly southerly) along said creek (now in Barge Canal) to southern end of bridge of the Albany & Vermont R. R. (leased to D. & H.). Continuing from end of railroad bridge along the old lines of said extinct creek down and through the Cemetery Pond (now filled in) to about the center of old Northside branch of 1823 Champlain Canal (which center of the canal is also the line of the Village Fire District). From the center of said canal near Cemetery Pond in an easterly direction to a point near the end of Sixth Street in the 1825 Champlain Canal (also along lines of the Fire District). Thence along lines of the old Champlain Canal through the side-cut in a southeasterly direction to the center of the north branch of the Mohawk River. Then easterly through the said branch of the Mohawk River to the place of beginning.<sup>4</sup>

*Village Form of Government*—The Village operates under the special Charter of 1795. This requires a special act of the Legislature to amend it. The details of Village government are controlled by the Charter noted below.<sup>5</sup> The officers of the Village are a Mayor, one Trustee for each of the (3) wards, three Assessors, a Collector, a Treasurer, a Clerk, a Street Commissioner, a Village Attorney, and a Chief of the Fire Department. The Treasurer, Clerk, Street Commissioner and Chief Engineer or Fire Chief are selected by the Village Board of Trustees. The other officers are elected at elections designated by the Charter of the Village of Waterford.<sup>5</sup>

*Population of Village*—(1950) was 2968. Eight and one-half per cent were foreign-born.

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<sup>4</sup> Data taken from Map, Corporate Limits of Waterford, Village Engineer, C. J. Weaver C.E., June 12, 1925.

<sup>5</sup> Charter, Village of Waterford, April 25, 1918 and February 2, 1948.



## TOWN OF WATERFORD

*Town of Waterford*—Was formed on April 17, 1816, being taken from the Precinct of Halfmoon.

*Population of Town of Waterford*—The population of the Town of Waterford (1950) which includes both the Village and the Northside was 6,052, an increase of six per cent since the Federal census of 1940.

*Waterford Town Corporation Boundaries*—Begin where a once small creek went under the road leading to Halfmoon Village. The non-water carrying creek in 1955 has a gulley, however, located a few yards beyond or north of the point where the upper (No. 96) and lower (No. 97) Halfmoon roads out of Waterford come together. The line continues westward down said gulley to where the mouth of the creek once entered the Mohawk River. This is the westward bound of the Waterford Township.

The line continues south down the Mohawk river and then southeast along the northern branch or sprout of said Mohawk, to where the same strikes the center of the Hudson River.

(Revert to creek gulley near Halfmoon). The line then continues eastward, described in 1878 as follows: "Where the road crosses the creek (gulley) then south seventy-three degrees and thirty minutes east one hundred and sixty chains and thirty links, to where a creek (still existent) called the Muder (Mudder) Kill intersects U. S. route No. 4 (north of G. E. Silicone plant) then down said Muder Kill to its entrance into the Hudson River, then east to the bounds of Saratoga County (The Hudson River) and then along bounds of said county southerly and westerly to the place of beginning."

*Town Form of Government*—The Town is governed by what may be termed the "Council" form of government, guided by the elected officials of the Town, all of whom, except the Town Clerk, have voting powers within the Council.

The officials are elected each two years in accordance with the Consolidated Laws of New York. The chief executive of the Town is the Supervisor. He not only presides at the Town Board Meetings but also represents the Town of Waterford on the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Data contributed by James A. O'Connor, Town Attorney and Asst. Dist. Attorney, Saratoga County, February 17, 1956.

In addition to the Supervisor elected each two years are the other members of the Town Board who are two Justices of the Peace and two Councilmen. One Justice and one Councilman are elected each two years for a four year term. A Town Clerk is elected each two years. In Waterford the Town Clerk is "secretary" to the Town Board and also has been given the office of Tax Collector. The Town also elects three Assessors who have overlapping terms. Each two years one Assessor runs for a four-year term and one runs for a two-year term.

The Town also has certain appointive officials, namely, the Town Attorney, the Town Superintendent of Highways, five Constables, and a Registrar of Vital Statistics. In 1955 a Supervisor of Playgrounds was appointed to comply with insurance requirements.

Both the Town Supervisor and the Town Clerk are permitted to appoint Deputies to assist them. These officers carry no salaries.

*Churches in Waterford*—Waterford has seven churches listed in the order that they began religious work in the Town:

First Waterford Methodist Church (1802-1803)

First Presbyterian Church (1804)

Grace Episcopal Church (1810) (Missionary in 1795)

First Baptist Church (1812). Perhaps before.

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church (1843)

St. Ann's (Northside) Catholic Church (1843)

Wesleyan Methodist Church (Northside) (1945). (Was a Mission and Sunday School in 1896.

*Schools*—Union Free School District No. 1 on Fourth Street, Waterford

Union Free School iDistrict No. 2, Saratoga Avenue, Northside

St. Ann's Parochial School, Vanderwerken Avenue, Northside

St. Mary's Parochial School, Sixth Street, Waterford

Brigg's Halfmoon Public School, Mechanicville Road, Halfmoon.

*Manufacturers*—John Friedrichsohn Cooperage Company (1791), (Barrels etc.)

Mohawk Paper Mills Inc. (Paper). (Second oldest plant in Waterford).

Eddy Valve Company (1847), (Valves and Hydrants)

Robert Reis Knitting Company (1891). (Underwear).

Laughlin Textile Mills, Inc. (1894). (Synthetic yarns, nylon-rayon).

Cluett-Peabody & Co. (1910). (Breaching, sanforizing shirt material).

General Electric Silicone Plant (1948). (Silicone products).

National Automotive Fibres, Inc. (Auto-trim, covers, and auto products).

New York State Highway Shops (1918). (Highway upkeep needs).

New York State Canal Shops (1918). Upkeep of Barge Canals).

Grand Union Storehouse (Stores supply center for New York, Vermont and Massachusetts).

*Transportation*—The Town is well equipped with transportation facilities. Two railroads, the "upper and lower," both under control of the Delaware and Hudson R. R. Corporation, care for railway shipments. Express shipments by truck come from Cohoes, New York.

Two Barge Canal branches, the Erie running to Buffalo, and the Champlain extending to Lake Champlain and Canada both serve Waterford.

In addition are the numerous heavy automobile trailer trucks which also carry heavy local shipments over interstate lines.

*Water Supply*—Municipal owned combination gravity system. Capacity, one million gallons each twenty-four hours. Water is drawn from Hudson River, treated and filtered. Water after treatment is pumped to two tanks 180 feet above the Village and supplies three fire districts, homes, and eleven manufacturing mercantile concerns.

*Fire Department*—Town and Village have good fire protection consisting of four fire companies well located over the Township with 333 volunteer fire fighters.

Their equipment consists of:

One 1937 Mack Gasoline Pumper (Knickerbocker's) with a capacity of 500 gallons per minute.

One 1956 Seagrave Pumper (Peck Hose Company) with a capacity of 750 gallons per minute.

One 1950 Chevrolet Pumper (Ford Hose Company), capacity 500 gallons per minute.

One Hook and Ladder Truck with 60 foot, hand-operated, extension ladder and one 1953 Ward-LaFrance Pumper with capacity of 500 gallons per minute (The Kavanaugh Hook and Ladder Company).<sup>7</sup>

*The Civil Defense Rescue Squad*—This unit already of great importance to

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<sup>7</sup> Data given by Fire Department Chief, Lionel Bechard.



our community is manned by selected members of all the Town fire companies, working on a three-months assignment.

Their ambulance, a 1955 Packard, is kept at the Knickerbocker's fire headquarters. The Squad President is Donald Dudden.

*Manufacturing Advantages* are numerous. Both the Halfmoon plateau and the Hudson River road offer spacious land sites which have already been partly occupied. The last named zone has rail, barge canal, and motor trailer connections and the Halfmoon site can be reached by motor trailer connections.

*Rural Areas* offer sand, gravel, and moulding sand deposits and the farming groups produce hay and a variety of garden stuffs generally hauled to the Menands farmers market.

*Building Sites* are unexcelled. Three land areas are high and furnish the finest kind of building sites for new homes. The Northside zone has "Clementville" while the "Swazey" site and others on the Halfmoon, plateau, together with the ample spaces on the Mechanicville Road (U. S. Route No. 4) offer home sites of the first quality.

*Erie Barge Canal Activity*—This "Erie" branch of the Barge Canal entering Waterford at the old "Side Cut" and extending to the Mohawk River above Cohoes has five locks which are classed as the greatest series of high lift locks in the world. The lift, Hudson to Mohawk, is 169 feet.

Passing through these locks in 1952 were 6820 vessels

"	"	"	"	in 1953	"	7028	"
"	"	"	"	in 1954	"	5248	"
"	"	"	"	in 1955	"	6528	"

The apparent decrease in the number of craft passed through these locks in 1954-1955 is due to better shipping methods including improved barges and tugs which result in fewer carriers but a total increase in the tonnage carried.

Nearly eight and one-half per cent of all the boats passing through the locks were pleasure craft and their number is constantly increasing.

The history of this canal and an account of the cargoes carried appears in the chapter "The Barge Canals."

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## **WATERFORD MAPS**

### **THE VAN SCHAICK PATENT, 1762-1767 (Map)**

Map No. 1 shows the Van Schaick of Halfmoon Patent which includes both the Village and the Town of Waterford. The Patent itself was also known in 1700 as the Precinct of Halfmoon. The map is a true copy of the original once owned by Mrs. Charles J. Weaver and given by Mrs. Weaver to the New York State Library. In tracing this map only the names of indistinct land owners were deleted by the author of this book. The map shows that the original route and windings of the "Great Road" (The "Battery" to Mechanicville) have remained unchanged for over two centuries.

### **MAP, THE VILLAGE OF WATERFORD, 1783-1805 (Map 2)**

Map No. 2 shows the Village of Waterford during its first four growing stages. At least twice during later years the village limits were expanded. The latter enlargements are not shown upon this map. The map brings to memory many things now forgotten. One of these features is the old sloop loading pier which extended into the merging waters of the Hudson and the Mohawk river. Also shown is lost Water Street and Coster's eight-acre island and John Vanderwerken's half "morgen" lot on First Street which also contained early burials.

### **LANDS SOLD BY ANNETIE LIEVERS TO ROELOFF GARRETS (VANDERWERKEN) 1686-1844 (Map 3)**

This map valuable until 1844 when civilizations, canal and railroads were added to it, shows the Village of Waterford, part of the Town, and fourteen islands once in the Mohawk delta. The map maker took pains to show the direction of the Mohawk's flow through its four branches. Branch No. 1 was at the south near Green Island. Quaint Dutch names such as "croepelbosses" (swamps), together with the once great extent of Wolcott's creek then emptying into the Cemetery pond, are shown upon this map. This map was obtained from virtually the last, local Vanderwerken and it gives a hint of one intricate Dutch custom which somehow permits the name of Roelof Garretse to actually mean Vanderwerken. (See map title).

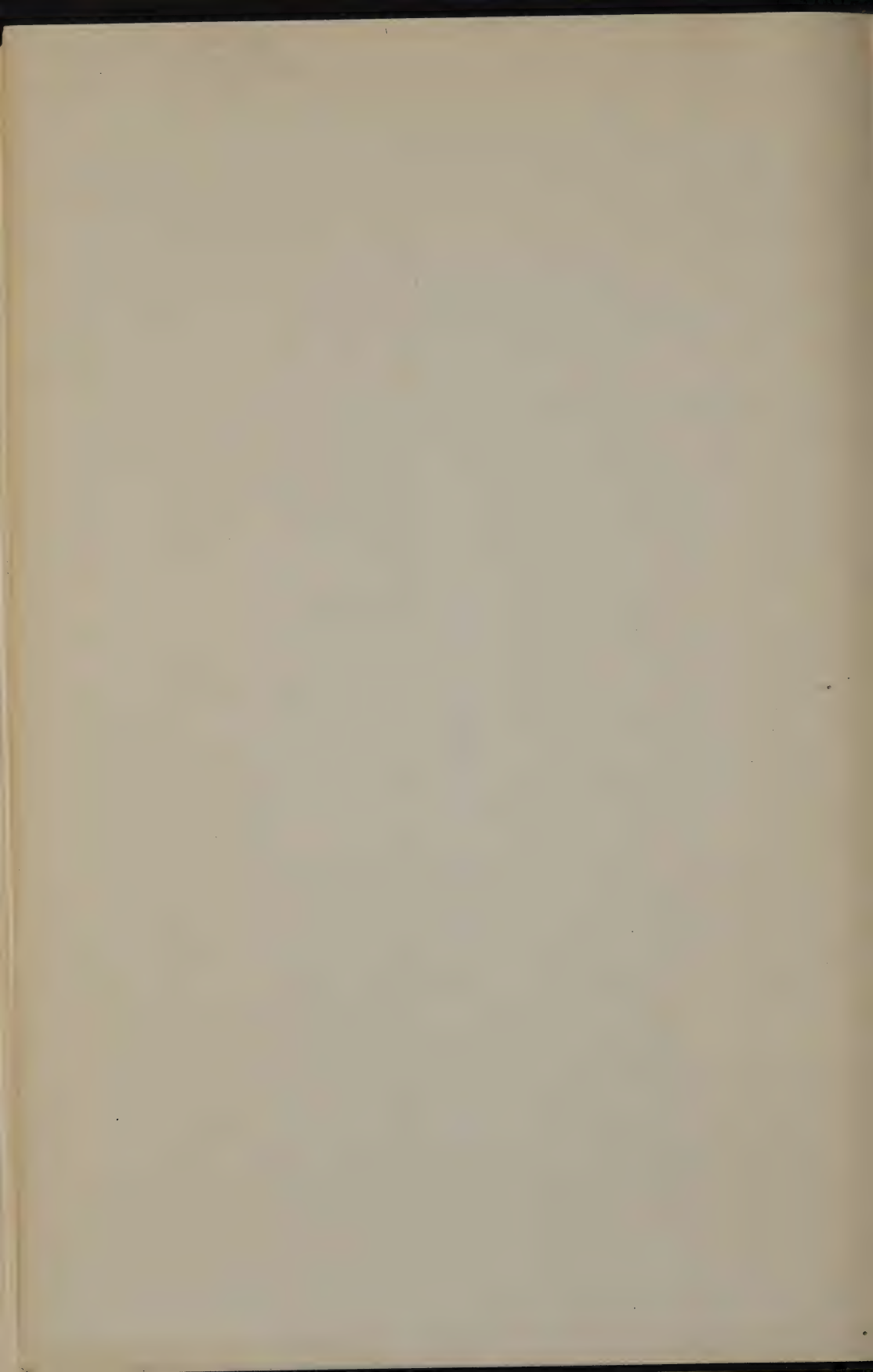
### **MAP, WATERFORD'S HISTORIC SITES, 1630-1955 (Map 4)**

This map is the author's plan to preserve for posterity Waterford's varied and illustrious historic sites. It begins with the 1600 Mahican Indian castle on Peebles Island and embracing two centuries, extends to places like Classic Hall, the General Stewart home and the Reformed Dutch parsonage all these being built in the early 1800's. None of the sites shown are in question except the exact position of the Mahican castle. All others are established by either printed data or were certified to by aged residents.

### **PICTURE OF HALFMOON POINT IN 1784**

This picture of Halfmoon Point shown elsewhere in this book needs an explanation since its author is unknown. It was found in the garret of a 154-year-old building. It is believed to be part of the story of early Waterford recited by a truthful but anonymous person writing for a Waterford newspaper in 1886 or before. This Halfmoon Point picture and another existing picture of the "Great Road," (not shown) together with many early newspaper items by this unknown author, were all checked for location and found to be correct.







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W29h  
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7

M.L.



50 100 150 200 250 300  
A Scale of Five Miles

# Van Schaick Patent 1762 - 1767



The Copy of a Map of the Lots land in the Patent formally Granted to Goose Gerneser and Philip Peterse Schuyler as Surveyed and laid down by Warrington Kitchener and Philip Van Rensselaer at the Request and under the Direction of Major Anthony Pen Eyck, Anthony Van Schaick, and Abraham Pen Eyck Dated September 1st 1767. The Lots are Divided into VI different Parcells of CXIV Lots to the 6<sup>th</sup> Range inclusive W from by Roman letters X Lots in the S of the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Lots 7<sup>th</sup> Range N of that of the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> Range contain acres and enclosed with N & S and E & W Lines. The first Lot with its proper Names of different persons from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> Range of the Lots are to be ascertained from the Map N

Map Renewed Feb 1953 S.E.H.  
Map Copied, Feb 1955 A.T. Livingston  
Map Retraced, June, 1955  
For History of Waterford. S.E.H.  
Map, No 1





MAP No 2

- = 1st. Division, 1783
- = 2nd Division, 1793
- ⊕ = 3rd Division, 1803
- ★ = 4th Division, 1805



The part of the island belongs to the late Van Schoonhoven and contains about 4 acres.

This part belongs to the late Vanderwerken and also contains about 4 acres.

MUD HAWK RIVER

The 1st division included within the yellow lines was laid out in 1783. The 2nd division included within the green lines in May 1793. The 3rd division included within the red lines in May 1803. The 4th division included within the blue lines in May 1805. The original plan was completed July 24 1805. The large dot at the angle of the printed lines in Broad Street represents a stone which is the original monument of the beginning of 2 certain parts or parcels of land of which the village is chiefly purchased. Said stone is situated 15' from the south side of Broad St and 10' from the west side of Broad St. The printed lines represent the boundaries of the 2 original proprietors of the land hereby represented laid out in lots forming the village. That the east and north of said line belongs to the late Van Schoonhoven and the south and west extending westerly to northern angular printed line belongs to Vanderwerken, that west extending to 2 other printed lines one with and one north belongs to the late Van Schoonhoven. The lots through which the 2 printed lines run from the large dot above mentioned are noted on either side with figures showing the number of feet in length and breadth of each lot.



# MAP

OF

Lands Described in a Deed

From *M<sup>rs</sup> Annetie Livers*, widow and Relict of *Captain Goose Vinschaick*: to *Rodol Garretse*: Dated

February 4-1080.

By *James Frost* Surveyor. Dec. 25-1844.

Scale: 8 Chains to an Inch.

## Remarks.

The first described tract, as shown on the map, is a strip of land, 100 feet wide, and 1000 feet long, situated on the north side of the Cohoes River, and is bounded by the river on the east and south, and by the land of the Cohoes Village on the west. This tract is situated on the north side of the Cohoes River, and is bounded by the river on the east and south, and by the land of the Cohoes Village on the west. This tract is situated on the north side of the Cohoes River, and is bounded by the river on the east and south, and by the land of the Cohoes Village on the west.

The second described tract, as shown on the map, is a strip of land, 100 feet wide, and 1000 feet long, situated on the north side of the Cohoes River, and is bounded by the river on the east and south, and by the land of the Cohoes Village on the west. This tract is situated on the north side of the Cohoes River, and is bounded by the river on the east and south, and by the land of the Cohoes Village on the west.

Area of the first described Tract, 100000 Sq. Feet.

Area of the second described Tract, 100000 Sq. Feet.

MAP N<sup>o</sup> 3





